Encounter

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John Mackintosh:
U.K. Dilemmas

Douglas Dunn:
New Poetry

Richard Lowenthal:
Has Détente Failed?

Edited by Melvin J. Lasky & Anthony Thwaite

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Dinah Brooke

Games of Love & War

ELSPETH WATERHOUSE, 22 years old, lying in a deckchair, beside the swimming pool, in a blue and white gingham bikini. Alfred knows also her breasts, quite full, but with flat nipples, and her pubic hair, sparse and soft and golden brown, just covering the Mount of Venus. But he looks mainly at her legs. He looks at her legs almost all the time. Each time she moves, twitching her foot to dislodge a fly or a mosquito, or lifting one buttock to relieve the pressure on it, he is astonished and comforted by the unbroken smoothness of her skin, the perfect geometrical shapes of her flesh. Her knees absorb him. The patella is round and flat. When her leg is straight it does not sag in a loose bag of skin. When she draws her knee up the outline is invisible. All these movements, undertaken so casually, so spontaneously, produce triangles, cylinders, symmetrical curves, one smooth outline dissolving into another. There is no organic untidiness here. Perhaps in his obsessive watching he expects something to be left behind. Some jagged end of bone, a lump of fat, a sagging muscle. She seems unaware of the perfection of her body. She complains from time to time of cramps, itches, burning sensations, pins and needles. They are invisible.

She is reading a psychiatric textbook. The book is old and heavy, with a red leather cover. It has been borrowed from the Westminster Public Library, and should have been returned several years ago. Elspeth reads one passage over and over again. "She was a single woman, 32 years old. A native of Ireland." In Elspeth's mind G. H. is tall, with large bones, fair skin, freckles and light grey eyes. She has pale reddish brown hair, rather frizzy. She says, "This pain is with me always. I cannot get away from my conscious self. I keep comparing states of feeling." Twice she tries to strangle herself, once with a strip of bed sheet, and once with a cord she borrows from another patient. She seizes a bottle of meths from a nurse and drinks it, but only succeeds in making herself sick. During the course of the next few days she makes two further attempts to strangle herself. She seems much better for a time. She makes herself helpful to the other patients. She wishes to be discharged. She goes to stay with friends. They say she seemed bright and happy and had spent a very pleasant evening. As soon as she is alone she drinks a bottle of Lysol. She is discovered, her stomach washed out and she is returned to hospital. Some months later she smashes a thick glass skylight and climbs up on to the roof clad only in her nightdress. She says afterwards that when she got to the roof she realised that if she did take her life it would mean great trouble for others, and therefore she had not acted at once. She says, "I was perfectly sane, but the mental pain was so intense that I wanted to end it all." Eventually she succeeds in drowning herself. This all happened many years ago. "The mental pain was so intense." She was a healthy well-developed woman, with no signs of any physical illness.

IT IS HOT. The air is so damp and warm it lies like a bath on the skin. Sweat trickles down between Elspeth's breasts. The thirty-two-year old Irish woman with fair skin and freckles has been dead for a long time. On the far side of the pool a group of

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Americans or Europeans, with deeply suntanned skins, are moving their heads slowly, raising their hands, talking and laughing. A young man in red swimming trunks gets up, walks to the edge of the pool. He has heavy shoulders and thighs. He rises up and down on his toes, slowly. Dives in, without making much of a splash. He raises his arms out of the water one at a time, with great deliberation, as if they are made of lead. He travels across the pool. On one wrist is a gold bracelet.

"I'm thirsty", Elspeth signals to a waiter. He comes over to her chair, made not of canvas, but of slatted wood with foam rubber cushions. He stands silently beside her and bows.

"Seven Up." He bows again.

"Do you want a drink?" Alfred shakes his head. The waiter bows and disappears.

THE SEVEN UP shines and glitters. There is more solid than liquid. The glass is almost full of ice. Bubbles struggle round the lumps of ice to find their way to the air. The side of the glass is cold against her forehead. It presses against the bone.

"I feel my thirst", she says. "I feel the heat."

She gets up and goes to stand by the edge of the pool. Rises up and down on her toes. Allows herself to fall, arching her body just sufficiently to enter the water without making much of a splash. The water is warmer than blood heat. She sinks through it, carrying with her a flood of bright dancing bubbles, white against the blue of the water. She feels them moving through the water, moving through her body, into her blood, searching for a passage through her veins, wriggling through the fibrous tissue of her muscles, and finding the spongy centre of her bones. Her mouth is open, her eyes closed, her hair rises gently behind her, and then sinks more slowly. Her knees and elbows sink. She is crouched like a frog. From her open mouth, from her hair, a few last bubbles rise. Her knees, her fingers, touch the bottom of the pool. It feels oily, greasy. Her eyes open. The blue water is inside them. Her lids seem to be pressed upwards. Her irises roll upwards. Her body flattens out. She lays her cheek against the greasy tiles at the bottom of the pool. Lets her tongue loll out loosely to lick it. She rolls over. Her wrists are heavy. Her knees float up. Her head is heavy. She breathes neither out nor in. She is in a bluish vacuum filled with chlorine and shadows. She has no desire to breathe. She need never breathe again. The surface of the water has almost stopped moving. The young man in a red bathing suit says,

"Hey, I think that girl's in trouble."

Alfred looks up. He has been staring at the leg rest of the slatted wooden chair. He looks at the pool. It is empty. The young man in the red bathing suit dives in. Alfred dives in. The water is agitated, full of light and shadows. They dive down with their eyes open. Alfred is not such a good swimmer as he used to be. On one hand he has two fingers and a thumb, on the other hand only one finger and a thumb. The young man in the red bathing suit reaches Elspeth first. He swoops down on her from behind and grabs her loosely floating body with one hand under each armpit. She is no longer floating in a vacuum with no need for breath. She cries out, swallows, breathes in water, chokes. She scrabbles with fingers and toes for a hold on the slippery tiles. "Leave me, leave me, let me stay." She kicks and flails, but helplessly, because the young man knows what he is doing, and has her in a firm grip. He is saving a life. Alfred is buffeted by the waves of her kicking, and rises through the water beside her, not trying to touch her. The young man's friends are standing around the edge of the pool.

"Oh well done!"

"Lucky he noticed."

"She seems to be still alive."

Two more bronzed young men help to pull her out. She is unconscious. Water dribbles from her mouth. Alfred treads water, holding on to the side of the pool. He needn't have bothered to dive in. The waiters watch, standing further back. A thin girl, wearing very large sunglasses, continues to sip her drink. The young man in the red bathing suit lays Elspeth's body flat on her back, turns the head to one side, and kneels astride her. He places his hands on her rib cage, one under each breast and leans foward, sits back, leans forward, sits back. Her surroundings are no longer blue, but black shot with red. She is imprisoned in a tight ball of

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nausea. Lumps of iron are inside her forehead and the back of her neck. She tries to roll her eyes so far that they can find the peaceful darkness at the back of her skull. But the nausea prevents her concentration. She coughs up bitter liquid that burns her throat. Her legs and forearms are cold, cold, cold. White and numb with cold.

ON THE FAR SIDE of the pool her father is standing, watching. He looks at Alfred:

"I thought I gave you both tickets back to London."

He is wearing a bathing suit, carrying a white towelling robe over one arm. In his hand sunglasses, a newspaper, a briefcase. His hair is iron grey, curly, cut short. His skin is very smooth. There is no hair on his thighs. Veronique stands beside him. She is wearing a white towelling robe identical to the one he is carrying. She is also carrying a briefcase. She is very short. The top of her head does not even come up to his shoulder. Her hair is short and dark. She is wearing red lipstick. Neither of them move. Elspeth's father cannot decide what to do. He grinds his teeth with rage. His face is impassive. What he wants to do is to go and sit down on a comfortable slatted wooden chair with foam rubber cushions and a leg rest, order a vodka and tonic, and discuss with Veronique the meeting they have just come from at the Thai Ministry of Commerce. In his mind he carries out this programme, but just at the moment when he is comfortably settled and has taken the papers he wants to discuss out of his briefcase and laid them on his lap, his relationship to Elspeth becomes known, either because Alfred says something, or because Elspeth herself recovers consciousness and sees him. He would prefer that she did not recover consciousness. He would very much like her to die. Her attempts to commit suicide irritate him so desperately that he finds himself continually praying for her death. "Leave me alone. Just leave me alone." The muscles of his lips twitch as he repeats the words in his head. She can't do anything properly. She cannot finish anything. She starts a course of study but does not complete it. She cannot decide what to do with her life. She cannot even make a serious decision to end it.

"Shall we go to another hotel?" asks Veronique.

"This is the only decent hotel in the city." He speaks viciously, through his teeth. He imagines turning round, walking quickly back into the hotel, hugging the hedge, trying not to be noticed, trying to make it clear to whoever may chance to notice him that he has seen nothing of what is happening by the side of the pool, hurrying through the lobby to the elevator, past the polite, impersonal, but inevitably somewhat curious gaze of the porters and receptionists whom he had passed going in the opposite direction only a minute before clearly with the intention of spending some time by the pool, into his room, packing hurriedly again, therefore not so methodically and tidily as he usually likes to perform this operation, down into the lobby, paying his bill, nervously tapping his fingers on the desk, looking over his shoulder, peering to see the unconscious or perhaps dead body of his daughter carried in, heads turning in curiosity, horrified exclamations, excitement, self-importance of those carrying her, Alfred following, pausing, looking around, pointing a finger, particularly remarkable since he has so few, making his escape impossible at the last moment, so that the whole business of packing and calling for the bill is wasted and merely serves to make him look foolish.

I could even then ignore Alfred, he thinks, ignore Elspeth, even if she is not dead and has regained consciousness and calls out to me, runs or stumbles over to me, calling "Daddy, Daddy", I could whisper to the receptionist "hurry, hurry", push her body, almost naked, still wet, away from me with one hand while I sign travellers cheques with the other, difficult procedure, Veronique would help me, hold them steady, perhaps she could pay, no she would be seeing that the doorman gets us a taxi, overseeing the baggage, getting in, holding the door open for me, telling the taxi driver where to go, whispering the name of another hotel into his ear so that no one can overhear and tell Alfred and Elspeth where we have gone. Would they let me go? Has she been having drinks, meals, putting them on my bill? Then I'd have paid for them. Would they be

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afraid that they would have to get a doctor, pay for a doctor, or a funeral? Perhaps I could deny that she's my daughter. Pretend she's mad. Say I've never seen her before. Alfred would say he knows I am her father. But Alfred too could be mad. He has scars on his head. Scars all over his body. He could very easily be mad. This is a confidence trick. These two young people are confidence tricksters. They move into expensive hotels and claim that some middle-aged man is the father of one of them, so that they can add their bill to his, a very clever move. Look in their baggage. They have no money. She cashed in the air tickets. They do have money. Then why, why, why does she need to claim I am her father? Veronique will back me up. The receptionist will look surprised. Openly surprised. Positively curious. He may even ask, "Excuse me Sir, I don't wish to be offensive, but is this young lady your daughter?" The bronzed young men who are so proud of their life-saving prowess will also look surprised. They would of course expect cries of pleasure from a parent whose child has just been saved from drowning, even if to drown was the child's own choice. They would be affronted, downright insulted that their labour is not appreciated. It would be appreciated by Alfred, but he is only her lover, and he could have saved her himself. They regard him with a certain amount of contempt because he was not quick enough. But he can be forgiven because of his scars. Discounted because of his scars. They wonder fleetingly whether he is even her lover. Maybe he has no penis, as well as very few fingers. There are scars on his torso. Maybe the shock made him impotent. Maybe that is why he looks at her legs. Maybe that is all he can do.

They all stare at the middle-aged man in astonishment. Hostility. "Hey, wait a minute, you can't just leave your daughter. She's sick. Or dead. Someone's got to look after her." I don't want to look after her. Why should I look after her? She's adult. Why can't she look after herself? Why won't she leave me alone? Why, why, why won't she leave me alone? "Leave me alone." He shouts. "Leave me alone." His voice is strangled. Not loud. The thin young woman in sunglasses looks towards him. Saunters back to her chair. Sits down. Continues to sip her drink.

ELSPETH GROANS. Vomits. Tries to lift her head. Opens her eyes. Shuts them again. "Oh God, I feel so sick." There are legs around her. Ankles. The point where the calf sharpens down into the ankle. Big toes. Cushions of flesh. Ridged. Covered with hard skin. Bouncing out around the nail. They seem to be dark red. Reflected light glows through them from underneath. Her experience is nausea. A pain all the way down the centre of her belly and in her chest. Burning in her throat. Yellow-tasting acid. The gritty feeling of the tiles on the side of the pool. Dust, earth, pieces of dry grass pressing against her skin. The top of her bikini twisted into a rope, hurting. Hands, hot, pressing her ribs down, letting her free, pressing down. She lifts her head sharply. Tries to turn her shoulders. The hands pause. Lift. She turns over. Dark figures lean over her. There is a gorilla, with heavy shoulders kneeling over her body. "Help, help, oh save me", he picks her up, weightless, futilely struggling, throws her white body over his shoulder, and lays her down by the side of the pool.

"What happened. Cramps?"

"Did you hit your head on the bottom of the pool?"

"You had us worried there for a minute."

She stares at the young man with heavy shoulders. He knows what happened. How will I ever escape from under this heavy body? But he has already moved. He stands up, helps her to her feet, takes a towel from one of his friends and puts it around her shoulders. He knows how to behave.

"You'd better go and lie down."

She walks unsteadily round the edge of the pool, supported by the gorilla. Approaches her father. He does not move. Veronique does not move.

"Are you all right?" It is hard for him to speak. The words are painful to him.

"Can I lie down in your room for a bit?"

"Your bathing suit is not on properly."

She is not holding the towel around her. The young man looks surprised. This pool is for residents of the hotel only. Veronique adjusts Elspeth's bathing suit so that her nipples are no longer exposed.

"I'll get you another room in the hotel for tonight."

They turn and walk back into the hotel.

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Elspeth's father, Veronique, Elspeth supported by the bronzed young man, Alfred, carrying her bag, which contains her clothes, jeans and a semi-transparent pale green Indian shirt, her thong sandals, her wallet and sunglasses, a wad of Kleenex and several bus and train timetables and sightseeing guides with addresses scribbled on them.

INSIDE THE LOBBY the air is dry and cool. Their eyes open wider, neck muscles tense and straighten. They breathe deeply. The coolness is exhilarating. Elspeth's father feels strange as he speaks to the receptionist. He doesn't look him in the face, but stares towards the revolving glass door as he speaks. Inside his head he is saying "I am not going to be forced to sneak out of the best hotel in Bangkok by this . . . this . . . ." Language eludes him. Sneak is a good word. It is exactly the right word. "Best hotel in Bangkok" has a fine sound to it. But "daughter"? The connotations are not correct. Where is the threat in the word daughter? Harpy is a word that he would feel happy with. Wailing, black, wild, flying and screaming through the air, nails dripping with blood, screams of wild laughter. But how to explain that to the receptionist? A charming young man. In fact there are two or three of them, with melting black eyes and smooth olive skins and dark suits, who speak English remarkably well. When the word daughter is pronounced their expressions soften. They feel able to express sympathy, interest and concern. Would she like to see a doctor? She looks cold, naked in the air conditioning. Would she like a hot drink? She smiles and shakes her head. She is dizzy. Her head is swimming now. She finds it quite easy to accept this friendly concern. She sees nothing strange in it.

"Thank you Daddy."

Veronique says, "I'll see to her." She touches Elspeth's father on the arm. She gives him permission to go back to the pool, sit down, order a vodka and tonic, open his briefcase and take out his papers, or push them aside for a moment and glance through his copy of the *Bangkok Post*. Her saying "I'll see to her", and touching him on the arm, mean that the receptionists too, and the bronzed young man, will absolve him from any further activity with regard to his daughter. He has accepted financial responsibility for her once again, and that seems to be enough.

There are secrets between women. The bronzed young man, once he has helped her to the door of the room, or perhaps through the door on to the bed, will retire gracefully. There will be no further need for him to stay. Veronique will help Elspeth off with her wet bathing-suit, rub her hair dry, help her to rinse her mouth, lend her a nightdress, and help her into bed, covered perhaps by a single sheet or a cotton blanket because the shock has made her feel cold, although to a person in normal health, in spite of the air conditioning, the room is still so warm that even a sheet would hardly be necessary. What is the purpose of Alfred? Once he has carried up the bag, which Veronique herself could easily have done, because it is not heavy, there is no need for him to stay. But he does carry the bag up, and when Elspeth is in bed, and the blinds lowered, Veronique herself has no inclination to stay. Elspeth should sleep. Veronique wants to go back to the pool to carry on her discussion with Elspeth's father. To carry on, after giving a soothing report on the state of his daughter's health, more for social form than because he really wants to hear it, with her interrupted afternoon. So perhaps Alfred is useful after all. He seems quite prepared to sit by Elspeth's bed while she sleeps. If she wakes up feeling sick again it will be comforting to have someone there. Does he intend to stay the night? The room was booked for a single person, but the bed is a double one. How will Elspeth's father explain the lover of his daughter? He ignores the problem. Veronique ignores the problem. After all, it is only the late afternoon. No explanations have to be given for events which take place in daylight.

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Michael Shanks

Can Europe Reform Itself?

Brussels Between Rhetoric & Reality

ONCE AGAIN, as so often in its life, the European Community is facing a crisis: a crisis of institutions, a crisis of direction, perhaps above all a crisis of identity. The European leaders have no difficulty in identifying the symptoms, in pointing to the painfully slow and tortuous process of decision-making, in lamenting the inordinate amount of time that has to be sacrificed to achieve often minuscule results. But if there is a consensus that things cannot go on as they are, there is none so far as to how they should be changed.

Much of the discussion focuses on the so-called European Parliament, on the need to give it more power and more legitimacy, through direct elections. Certainly this is important, but I believe that if one is thinking of institutional reform in the European Community, one has to start at the centre: that is, with the Treaty of Rome and its custodian and implementer, the Commission. Briefly, my thesis is that the Rome Treaty is an inadequate blueprint for solving Europe's problems in the late 1970s and 1980s, and that the Commission has become a sick organisation whose role and function within the structure of Europe's institutions needs to be fundamentally re-thought.

These are not views with which "Europeans"—and I write as a dedicated and lifelong believer in the importance of a united Europe—have traditionally associated themselves: at least not in the UK. The debate on Europe has been conducted by both sides in this country in a curiously fundamentalist way; and it has suffered in the process. Those who are against British membership of the European Community deride all its institutions indiscriminately. The "pros" therefore feel obliged to protect these institutions, even when they are demonstrably behaving in an unsatisfactory manner. Our Continental friends are more pragmatic. Nobody in Britain has attacked the Commission as pungently as West Germany's Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt; yet few statesmen have defended the cause of "Europe" with greater vigour.

LET ME TAKE the Treaty first. The Rome Treaty, conceived some twenty years ago, is essentially *laissez-faire* in outlook. Its guiding principle is the need to abolish all obstacles to the free movement of labour, goods, and capital throughout the area of the Community. Once free movement of resources has been achieved (runs the conventional wisdom of the Treaty) Europe will achieve the optimum allocation of resources; the optimum rate of economic growth; and (by implication) the optimum attainable social well-being.

Thus the Treaty is virtually silent on social matters, except in so far as social costs need to be harmonised in order to prevent gross distortions of competitive conditions between enterprises. (Hardly a clarion call for social reform!) Yet it is precisely in these areas that the Community has come under the greatest pressure to produce results over recent years, and that the Community institutions are justly under severe attack.

MICHAEL SHANKS *was, until his recent resignation, Director- General of Social Affairs in The European Commission (June 1973–February 1976). His article on "The English Sickness" appeared in* ENCOUNTER *(January 1972). He was a specialist writer on economic affairs for the "Financial Times" and the "Sunday Times", an industrial adviser to the British Government, and is today an industrial executive (a director of the British Oxygen Company). Among his books are "The Stagnant Society" (1961), "Britain and the New Europe" (with John Lambert) (1962) and "The Innovators" (1967).*

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Nobody could fault the Treaty of Rome from the point of view of the promotion of overall economic growth. In the period up to 1973, Europe achieved a rate of growth and prosperity unparalleled in world history. There is no doubt in my mind that the opening of the European economy resulting from the Common Market contributed very substantially to that attainment.

Equally clearly, however, growth did not quite solve all of Europe's social problems. While it greatly enlarged the horizons of the broad masses of Europe's people—and in so doing encouraged expectations which in today's more straitened circumstances it is proving increasingly hard to meet—it also revealed a number of imperfections.

First, the growth was demonstrably uneven—as between regions, and as regards employment opportunities between different categories of people. Job opportunities remained limited for some categories of old and young workers, and for some grades of female workers.

Second, the fuelling of Europe's boom involved increasing dependence on unskilled migrant workers—now estimated, with their dependents, to number some *twelve* million in the nine Community countries—whose social integration was on the whole woefully inadequate. In recent years Europe has seemed to be busily manufacturing for itself the same complex of racial problems, focused on an unintegrated alien sub-proletariat, with which the USA has been painfully grappling over many years. Today, a new dimension has been added to this already explosive problem. With the onset of the recession, each of the big immigrant-importing countries has imposed a blockage on new intake of labour from non-Community countries. Of the twelve million estimated migrants in the Community, about two-thirds come from non-Community countries: from Turkey, Greece, Jugoslavia, Spain, Portugal, North Africa—and in the case of the UK, from the Caribbean, West Africa, and the Indian sub-continent. The UK situation in this regard is somewhat unique. As regards the Continental countries, however, the main victims of the recession to date—along with the under-25 age group, who in all countries have borne the main burden of unemployment—have been the group of Mediterranean neighbour-countries of the Community which over the years have established a pattern of exporting their surplus labour to the richer countries to their north: a pattern which has now been abruptly broken. It is clear that these countries cannot find jobs for all their people at home. It is also clear that in every case they have problems of social and political instability to compound their economic difficulties, and the Community simply cannot ignore these. One of the most urgent problems on the Community's agenda is to establish a common immigration policy which will regulate its relations with its southern neighbours in this most sensitive area (bearing in mind that most of these countries are either aspirant members of the Community or have special treaty ties with it); it should relate the intake of immigrants both to job opportunities and to the Community's ability and will to offer full social integration rather than economic exploitation.

THE THIRD BY-PRODUCT of economic growth has been an increasing awareness of its costs. These costs are of different kinds. There are, of course, the problems of environmental pollution, to which we are rightly now much more sensitive than in the past. Also, we are rightly much more sensitive to the problems of boring, stultifying, often dangerous and unhealthy jobs, to which many of our people are condemned in order to provide the fruits of growth for the rest of us. Quite rightly, the degree of tolerance of these kinds of jobs—as of authoritarian management—is sharply diminishing in today's Europe.

And there is another, related, area where tolerance is also fast diminishing. What was perhaps not fully appreciated when the Treaty of Rome was being drafted was the extent to which the realisation of the full benefits of the Common Market would depend on the willingness and ability of Europeans to accept change in the place and nature of work. It is easy to forget that Europe has been experiencing three simultaneous revolutions in the last two decades. There has been an Agricultural Revolution leading to the displacement of millions of peasants every year into the urban economy (a product of the derided common agricultural policy). There has been a Technological Revolution, as Europe has caught up with the level of American technology over large areas of industry. And there has been a Structural Revolution, as national protective barriers in each country have been swept away by the establishment of the Common Market. All of these have involved changes, on a massive and hitherto unprecedented scale, in the pattern of working life of ever-larger numbers of Europe's citizens; and it is only too evident that willingness to accept this pattern of change, especially in a period of recession and uncertainty, is diminishing sharply.

TO SUM UP, THEREFORE, it is clear that economic growth *à la* Rome Treaty did not solve Europe's social problems, but in some ways complicated them. This does not mean that the reduction of growth provides any kind of a solution; it does precisely the opposite. The moral, I suggest, is rather different. It is that if the Common Market

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is to be maintained, if progress is to be made towards economic and monetary union, there has to be a careful analysis of the implications of the pattern of economic growth so far achieved, and particularly of its costs. And a social policy has to be prepared and carried out which will meet these costs and tackle the problems of change before it is too late. Otherwise, the Community faces the evident risk that social, industrial and political opposition to the implications of the common market and growth will build up, to the point at which the real benefits of European integration will be in jeopardy. In my opinion we are dangerously near that point today.

All of this illustrates the importance of a Community policy to cover those areas about which the Treaty of Rome is conspicuously silent—the "new look" areas of social and regional policy, environmental and consumer protection. These were the areas stressed in the historic Summit conference held on the eve of British, Irish, and Danish accession. Following that conference I was appointed as head of the Commission's Social Affairs Directorate-General, and invited to prepare a social action programme to cover the years 1974–76. This action programme was approved by the Council of Ministers in January 1974, and in spite of a number of (mainly unnecessary) difficulties—of which more in a minute—is well on the way to being achieved, ahead of schedule. In a bleak period for Community solidarity, it constitutes one of the few success stories for the Commission in recent years.

IF ONE ACCEPTS the analysis above—that social policy should be complementary to policies aimed at economic growth—it is not hard to discern the priorities for Community social policy in this period. (I shall concentrate here on the social action programme as such, rather than deal with the related but in my view subsidiary areas of regional, environmental and consumer protection policy.) *Pace* the fundamentalists, harmonisation of Europe's diverse systems of social protection is not a high priority at this point in time; nor is the harmonisation or Europeanisation of collective bargaining. The priorities have to do with improvements in manpower planning and vocational training, strengthening labour mobility, developing the skill potential of Europe's workforce, and especially improving the prospects of the disadvantaged groups in the labour market: women, migrants, the young, the handicapped. A second group of priorities is concerned with the need to improve health and safety at work, to ensure greater job security and greater industrial democracy, to ensure more participation and more humanised working methods and conditions. A third group of priorities is concerned with the welfare of the worst-off sections of the population—a group among which the migrants and their families loom large. The need in this area is not to achieve a blanket harmonisation of social systems, but to tackle the worst cases of poverty and deprivation and to ensure that nobody falls below agreed minimum standards.

It is around these basic objectives that the Commission's present social action programme is oriented. On paper at least the results to date look quite good—by comparison with other areas, and by comparison with the rather slender achievement in the social field before 1973. In the employment field, the Social Fund—a fund at the disposal of the Commission to help finance and promote schemes for training, re-training and re-deploying workers affected by redundancy—has been greatly expanded and focussed on agreed priority sectors: young workers, workers in areas of high unemployment, disabled needing rehabilitation, migrants, farmworkers moving into industry and workers in the textile industry. Coal and steel workers are covered by separate schemes. To date the UK has received, with very little publicity, rather more than £60 million from the Community Social Fund. Community directives to ensure equality of pay and opportunity for women have been approved by the nine member-governments. A European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, under the tripartite direction of governments, employers and trade unions has been established. A comprehensive European programme for coordinating work on the rehabilitation of the disabled is being implemented. For the first time, regular consultation on national employment policies has been set up under the aegis of the Commission—both at official level, and at a more political level involving governments, employers and union leaders.

In the field of working conditions, Community directives have been established on redundancy policy, and others are in the pipeline to protect workers faced with changes of ownership of their enterprise and other contingencies. A comprehensive programme on industrial health and safety has been prepared. A "European Foundation" for improving living and working conditions—under the same tripartite direction as the European Vocational Training Centre—has been approved and, but for certain circumstances to be explained below, would have been operational many months ago. An action programme dealing with the humanisation and democratisation of work, in many ways complementary to the

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proposals recently circulated by the Commission concerning worker participation on Boards of enterprises, has been approved by the Commission and awaits the approval of member-governments. There has been a great expansion in contacts and consultation over a wide area of policy with representatives of employers and trade unions.

In the broader areas of social welfare, the first-ever Community directives in the field of social protection are lying in the in-trays of Ministers for decision. A regular process of consultation in all areas of social protection has been established for the first time between the Commission and national governments, from which priorities for future harmonisation should emerge. A long-term programme for the social integration of the severely handicapped is virtually complete. Europe has launched, under the auspices of the Commission and with the participation of governments and voluntary welfare agencies in each of the nine countries, its first-ever programme for direct action on poverty —a project for which the Treaty of Rome provides no obvious mandate. As regards the complex of problems involving migration and the conditions of the migrant workers and their families in the Community, a comprehensive programme has been prepared and agreed in principle by the Council of Ministers, and detailed measures covering different aspects of the programme are in the pipeline.

THESE ARE SIMPLY THE HIGHLIGHTS of what is by any standards the most ambitious programme for social reform ever prepared by any institution of the European Community. I will not weary the reader with further details. Suffice it to say that the programme, which I had the responsibility of preparing, arguing through the Council of Ministers and implementing, is running if anything a little ahead of schedule; and barring a political change of wind or extreme incompetence in the Commission (neither of which, as we shall see, can be altogether discounted) will be completed as planned before the end of this year. The period during which the programme has been developed has been described—in my view, accurately—by a distinguished and impartial UK observer as "the time when the Community not only acquired a wide-ranging social policy but made it visible and felt."[1]

SO FAR, one might say, so good. Why all the fuss? Clearly, on the record—and to judge also from the many speeches and protestations made by members of the Commission and member-governments—Europe's institutions are responding to the social imperatives of the age and giving the Community its much-needed "human face."

Unfortunately there is another side to it. As I mentioned above, social policy is an area where the Treaty of Rome is largely silent. Progress, therefore, depends very largely on the degree of *political will* in governments and in the Commission itself, legislative sanctions being largely non-existent. That political will has been ebbing from the beginning of 1974 onwards, with the result that much of the social progress embodied in the action programme is likely to be diluted in practice, if not on paper. The "human face" of Europe is, I fear, at present a matter more of cosmetics than of character.

The reasons for dilution at national level are not far to seek. Social reforms cost money, and in a period of inflation and economic stringency there are always cogent arguments at national level against schemes for more public spending, especially if some of them are designed to benefit foreigners.

I learned this very early in my time in Brussels, when I paid the first of several abortive visits to Bonn to try to persuade the German government to agree to increase the budget of the Social Fund. At this time Willy Brandt was still German Chancellor, and I pointed out to my hosts the apparent discrepancy between the demands for more resources to be allocated to social reform which Chancellor Brandt had voiced in the 1972 Paris Summit and the present stance of his government. "Ah yes", I was told, "there has been some confusion on that score. The trouble is that in his statement the Chancellor forgot to mention one qualifying clause. He should have said, 'Germany is in favour of more resources being devoted to an active programme of social reform at European level, *so long as it doesn't cost any extra D-marks. . . .*' "

Unfortunately, Western Germany is not the only country to prefer rhetoric to reality where European social reform is concerned. In all areas of European policy there is an element of hypocrisy, a contrast between what governments find convenient to profess and what they find politic to afford. But I believe that it is in social policy that the temptation to this hypocrisy is greatest and where it has been least resisted. Apart from cost, there are other reasons why this should be so.

ONE REASON IS that different countries in the Community are at different stages of social development and levels of wealth, and consequently have different social priorities—quite

[1] *Work and Industrial Relations in the European Community*. By MICHAEL P. FOGARTY (P.E.P. May 1975).

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apart from the genuine differences resulting from cultural and historical variances. (Catholic countries, as is well known, have a different approach to "family policy" from Protestant countries.) For a poor country like Italy or Ireland the overwhelming social priority is more jobs. A rich country like Denmark or West Germany is more interested in "levelling up" standards of social protection and promoting worker participation. But the poor countries cannot afford to import the social-protection standards of the rich; and the rich as yet show no willingness to subsidise such importation.

Moreover, where governments see the necessity or the opportunity for social reform, they much prefer to take credit for it themselves rather than appear to be being forced into it by "Eurocrats in Brussels." Since Brussels has no treaty mandate to impose social reform, this is not an unreasonable view. This means that the Commission can either do good by stealth, allowing member-governments to take credit for reforms which they would probably not have introduced but for prodding from Brussels. This has been done more than once in the last few years, not least as regards the UK. Or the Commission can win cheap popularity at the cost of effectiveness by trying to outbid the national governments in rhetoric. This, on the whole, the present Commission has found more congenial.

IN FACT I SOON FOUND in Brussels that a social action programme which went beyond rhetoric and window-dressing would be a positive embarrassment to some Commissioners. To the present President, an unreconstructed Gaullist in his approach to social questions, a social policy with positive content was clearly a strange and possibly menacing animal. The Vice-President in charge of social affairs, Patrick Hillery, comes from the Irish *Fianna Fail* party which is the nearest equivalent to a Gaullist Party outside France. In the opinion of well-informed commentators, Dr Hillery has not been one of the most conspicuous successes among Commissioners. A curiously isolated man—a tendency which has unfortunately been encouraged by some members of his personal entourage—his objectives with regard to social policy remain obscure.

So the very success of the social policy came to seem an embarrassment to some Commissioners who had called for and approved the programme. Strange things started to happen. On the one hand, the Commission called for even more dynamic and wide-ranging policies. At the same time they removed the staff who could have carried them out and transferred them to other posts where they were not needed. Appeals to relate the programme and priorities to the means available fell on deaf ears. A reconstruction of the directorate-general—certainly much needed—was called for, as a matter of great urgency. Having been prepared, and all those concerned having been duly consulted and informed, the proposals lay in the President's in-tray for eight months. For all I know they are there still.

There were other idiocies, many of them too trivial to bore the reader with. But the message was clear. The social action programme which the Commission had itself called for and approved, and on which it congratulated itself loudly and frequently in public, was in fact unwelcome to some people at the top of the Commission, perhaps because it was too radical and strayed too far from the safe confines of the Treaty.

LET ME GIVE TWO EXAMPLES which seem to me to indicate the element of hypocrisy in much of European social policy at the present time. The first concerns the migrants action programme. As I have already mentioned, this was identified as one of the key areas in the social field when the overall social action programme was agreed at the beginning of 1974. Detailed proposals were immediately prepared in my department to implement the broad principles of action already agreed. But these were blocked in the Commission. Instead of pressing forward with concrete measures which might actually do some good the Commission started an internal debate on the principles of migration policy which took up a year, ending up with the identical conclusions previously agreed with the Council of Ministers. The debate on principles then had to take place again in the Council, with the same result. In consequence the implementation of detailed measures to aid the migrants has been delayed for approximately eighteen months for no good reason. Fortunately, enough internal work has been done to enable the Commission staff to make up much of the time lost during the next few months; but the delay was quite unnecessary, and in human terms cruel.

My second example belongs more to the realms of farce than of tragedy. At the end of 1974, after long debate, the Council of Ministers approved the establishment of "A European Foundation for the Environment, Living and Working Conditions", and called for it to be set up in Ireland as a matter of maximum urgency. This institution was to be Europe's "think tank" on social and environmental questions, concentrating particularly in the short term on ways of avoiding alienation on the shop floor. Ireland, as the host country (an honour for which it had lobbied

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assiduously) was to find a building to house this prestigious institution. This the Irish Government up to the time of writing (February 1976) has failed to do. The reason apparently is that the Government is not prepared to state publicly whether it thinks the Foundation should be in Dublin or in a provincial city—for reasons of employment policy. Since the total permanent staff of the Foundation will be about fifteen to twenty people, of whom not more than a quarter are likely to be Irish, this seems to indicate a certain lack of proportion. When I urged Dr Hillery to do something to get things moving as the Commissioner responsible, he replied that as a past and possibly future Irish politician he had no intention of intervening. And so the Foundation, on which so much rhetoric has been expended, and whose establishment everybody concerned has welcomed with enthusiasm, remains to this day homeless and stillborn.

FOR THESE REASONS—and many others I could mention—I am not very optimistic about the ability of the Commission as at present constituted to meet the social challenge of the Europe of the late 1970s. This is in no sense a criticism of the staff, who are for the most part dedicated and intelligent men and women. But it is a criticism of the present leadership of the Commission, its present sense of priorities and of its role within the total spectrum of Europe's institutions. I have criticised what I believe to be the inadequacies in the present crisis of the Treaty of Rome. Let me now say a little about the Treaty's guardian, the Commission—no longer from the limited standpoint of social policy, but in the context of European policy as a whole.

I SHALL SAY LITTLE—though I could say much—about the serious administrative defects of the institution. Some of these are inevitable, given the problems of working in a variety of different languages and on the basis of a number of very different national administrative traditions. But they have been compounded by a personnel and administration policy which would have been regarded as mildly reactionary in the Naples of King Bomba 125 years ago. A heavy and pedantic bureaucracy. Allocation of senior posts on the basis of nationality rather than merit. Staff policy quite unrelated to priority needs. Very little mobility between jobs and departments. . . . These and other defects combine to create an extremely dissatisfied—though able and dedicated—staff, and to limit the credibility of the Commission to the outside world.

More serious, however, in my view is the lack of leadership which the thirteen Commissioners (with certain distinguished exceptions such as Soames, Gundelach, and Cheysson) are giving to their staff. The reason for this, I believe, is as follows. The Commission is still traumatised by its conflict with General de Gaulle. Because de Gaulle tried to browbeat the Commission and degrade it into a kind of European service agency, and at the same time to freeze the process of European integration, the Commission has come to believe that it alone can forward the cause of European unity through the mechanism of the Treaty. The Presidency of the Commission tends to assume: "*L'Europe, c'est moi.*" It has come to believe that national governments are in a sense the enemy, the incarnation of national tendencies that must somehow or other be subordinated to the greater good of the Community. Hence the Commission insists in an increasingly prickly way on its status as a *quasi*-government, on its unique right to make proposals for European integration —the famous "*droit d'initiative*"—and it insists on operating at arms' length from the national governments with whom the reality of power still rests.

This may have been a sensible strategy when fighting General de Gaulle, but it is somewhat out of date. Not only is there less and less mileage to be got out of the Treaty, but the Commission lacks the credibility and the authority to play at being a government. In any case, the Commission cannot exercise genuine freedom from national governments when each Commissioner owes his appointment—and his re-appointment after his four-year term of office—to his national capital.

Moreover, in fact such progress as has been made towards European integration in the last eighteen months—and it is perhaps more than appears on the surface—has tended to come, not from Commission initiatives rammed down the throats of recalcitrant national governments, but from the growing tendency of the Community's political leaders to multiply their contacts and to discuss and align national policies before implementing them. It is at this level, the level of Prime Ministerial meetings, that the future unity of Europe is being forged. It may be a long way from the original Federalist dream, but it does offer some prospect of realistic advance.

IT OFFERS, FURTHERMORE, a specific role for the Commission. Clearly there is a need for some executive body to translate the generalised political objectives emanating from the Summit—or the "European Council", as it is now called—into precise, workable blueprints. This requires the Commission to play a more executive, less political role than it has recently sought. But it seems to me a far more promising road for the

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Commission to travel than the alternative of splendid isolation in a kind of political vacuum, while real life goes on elsewhere.

At the same time, as the recent Tindemans Report has proposed, the Commission should be given more real political freedom by allowing the President to participate in the selection of the other Commissioners and in allocating portfolios. A more effective European Parliament would also help enormously to confer genuine political freedom on Commissioners, by offering an alternative career structure to European politicians outside national administrations.

A realignment of European institutions around the European Council would also require a change in the Council of Ministers—the body (actually non-existent) which is supposed to pass judgment on all Commission proposals. It is non-existent because there is not one Council but several, depending on the subjects to be discussed. Thus, Finance ministers discuss the Commission's budget, Agricultural ministers discuss agricultural proposals, Labour ministers social policy, and so forth. What is lacking is any formal means of interrelating these different aspects of European policy. What is needed, in my view, is a regular Council of Ministers concerned with European policy as a whole, bringing in specialist ministers as required, and acting as the formal link between the Commission and the European Council.

These proposals, and others which would fit well with them and which are adumbrated in the Tindemans Report (prepared by the Belgian Premier at the request of his colleagues, and due for decision very shortly) seem to me to offer a new institutional way ahead for Europe. This is a necessary condition for further progress towards European unity, but of course it is by no means a sufficient condition.

IF ONE ASKS, THEN, "What more is needed?", I have to say, hesitantly and reluctantly, "A new blueprint." In one sense Europe has had more than enough blueprints in recent years; and the risk of disillusion in preparing yet another is considerable. But none of the recent blueprints has involved the full-scale commitment of all the member-governments. None has had the status of the Treaty of Rome. The Treaty was a splendid expression of the needs as seen in the middle to late 1950s, and it has proved a remarkably durable and flexible instrument. But it seems to me, as I have argued, no longer to reflect the priorities facing Europe in the late 1970s; and unless these priorities can be seen to be being tackled the structure of free competition created by the Treaty could be vulnerable to political pressure. If that is lost, all is lost.

So I believe that we have to sit down again, with a total political commitment, to try to re-chart the dimensions, not just of the Europe we would like to see, but of the Europe we are prepared to pay for and to live with. Only then, I believe, will we be able to see if Europe has the will to create itself.

Near an airport

Beyond the new houses stricken planes
Have lost their runways. That or their gross bulks,
Forgetting flight, blunder across country.
Whatever the cause they utter hoarse distress
At every window and standing on chairs
I watch their helpless tails between the gables.

This is their sweat-out. Always they fret away
Whatever in being earthbound atrophies.
Whingeing in tight circles, turning clear
Of sheds and hangars, they lighten towards the climb
That dares not falter. What earned balance when they drift
At last over the squat chimneys, streaming sky.

Frank Ormsby

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Peter Schwiefert

Letters to a Mother

LETTERS TO A MOTHER forms part of the surviving correspondence of a young German, Peter Schwiefert, who emigrated from Germany to Portugal in 1938, at the age of 21, and was killed six years later fighting with the Free French. The correspondence has already been published in France, where it has had an enthusiastic reception, and will shortly be published in London and New York, under the title *The Bird Has No Wings*[1]

The story which these letters tell is a remarkable one. Schwiefert's father, the poet and playwright Fritz Schwiefert, was a German; his mother, however, was Jewish, and being half-German, half-Jew, in the Germany of 1938 presented the young Schwiefert with a problem which he felt he could not solve except by emigration and by committing himself to Judaism. His mother, on the other hand, was a wholly assimilated Jewess; she married in succession three German husbands, and her two daughters by her second and

third husband were unaware that their mother was Jewish. In 1938, owing to the rising tide of Nazi persecution in Germany, she contracted a *mariage de convenance* with a Bulgarian. This enabled her to emigrate to Sofia, where she was baptised into the Orthodox church, and experienced a genuine form of religious conversion.

Mother and son, therefore, took opposite paths out of the predicament created by their Jewish blood. The mother left Germany to escape persecution and, a Jew, proclaimed herself a Christian; the son left by an act of free will, an existential decision which he felt was unavoidable if he was to preserve his true identity and, a Christian, declared himself a Jew. He left, not because he was running away from something, but because he was looking for something, and the object of his search was, essentially, himself.

Yet though mother and son were so drastically divided, geographically and spiritually, the mother remained, as these letters show, the object of the son's passionate devotion; and it was a necessary part of his search for himself that he should try to understand his relationship with his mother and establish it on so unshakable a basis that it would survive all the differences in their characters and in their reaction to the terrible events in which they were involved.

THE LETTERS therefore tell the story of an intense little personal drama played out as an incident, a kind of minor sub-plot, in a great historical tragedy, the persecution of the Jews by National Socialism; but the story is told, on the son's part, with such intensity, passion, and admirable lucidity that it ceases to be little or personal and we feel that it mirrors, in a peculiarly vivid and individual way, all the vast issues which the tragedy involved.

In part, the letters are an account of a young man's response, brave, intelligent, resourceful, to the problems created by anti-Semitism and the triumph of the Nazis in Germany. In part, they are a love story, of a peculiarly moving kind, of a son's passion, not only for a mother but, as he himself tells us, for a woman who embodies for him, *das ewig Weibliche*, the eternal feminine, in a form which he will never meet with again. But over and above all this, they are also a *Bildungsroman*, the story of a young man's education, and self-education, in life and in love and his growth from adolescence into manhood. From this point of view they recount, not a tragedy, but a triumph, because at the end they leave us with the sense that the young man has realised all the potentialities, of courage, of honesty, of intelligence and love which make him an exceptional human being and would, if he had lived, have made him the writer he so much wished to be.

As for the mother, in the son's letters she appears only as the shadowy figure, charming, worldly, slightly frivolous, which was the object of his love and devotion. It is only at the very end, in her only surviving letter to him, written when, unknown to her, he is already dead, that, as in some splendid *coup de théâtre*, she suddenly reveals herself as everything he believed or could have wished her to be, a mother and a woman worthy of his love for her and with a power of feeling and understanding equal to his own. Life is sometimes itself a great dramatic artist; but not often, we feel, does it work to such effect as the way in which this last letter of the mother's completes and consecrates the death of the son.

[1] *The Bird Has No Wings: Letters of Peter Schwiefert.* Edited by CLAUDE LANZMANN. Translated by BARBARA LUCAS. Search Press (2–10 Jerdan Place, London SW6), £3.50, paper £1.95; St. Martin's Press, $7.95.

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WE SHOULD NEVER CEASE to remember and mourn those millions of victims who were sacrificed on the reeking altars of National Socialism; but perhaps we should grieve most for those of them who died too young to enrich the world with what they might have achieved if they had been permitted to live. Certainly these letters leave one with an intense feeling of loss, as of some rare and exceptionally gifted person. But they also leave one with something more, which is a sense of gratefulness that not everything has been lost, either of the son or of the mother.

Goronwy Rees

Faro, 6 December 1938

DEAREST MOTHER,

I am terribly worried. Has anything happened? I've been without news for nearly a month now. Please don't leave me in this anxiety. I'm not so far away, you know, as to be unaware of what's going on. Have they started harassing you yet? Are you ill? Please, please write at once, if only a few lines.

I hope to get a letter by return post and am always close to you in my thoughts. Be brave, my dearest, and have faith that things will change. They will. They always do. Oh, if only my love could help you in any way at all! But how silly I am—it can only contribute to my own suffering.

Listen, I want to tell you something from the bottom of my heart: don't disown or condemn your and your own children's Jewishness. It's your whole strength. That doesn't mean that you have to prepare yourself for martyrdom. All you have to do is to love what has been given you as an honour. Because that's what it is. A grave responsibility. Don't forget that you can escape from everything, but never from yourself.

With my most fervent prayers for all of you,
Your *Peter*

Faro, 10 December 1938

DEAREST MOTHER,

I understand and shall say no more.

I didn't know about it in such detail. I only had vague news, rumours that reached me without my really taking them in, without giving them the importance they deserved. But your letter has now enlightened me. I'm ashamed now of having thought only of myself and of having therefore forgotten all the rest. Is it too late?

I've got work already. I'm giving German lessons. And I'm hoping to extend this activity by getting pupils in town. I'll do what I can and if the lessons don't work then I'll find something else. I've cut down expenses to the barest minimum. I want to help you, I'm entirely at your disposal. If you need me, if you think I can be useful to you in any way, you only have to write and I shall come at once, I promise. Everything I have belongs to you, and I would like you also to bear in mind Lisbon and my house. It's a possibility.

I've written you two long letters which you obviously haven't received. I've been waiting for yours for weeks. I've not had a word from Liena[2] either. Perhaps my letters simply aren't arriving. I say again in all sincerity: neither I nor my personal wishes have the slightest importance now. All sympathy for me is superfluous.

What you really must recognise is that my "romantic dreams" of departure and independence (as you call them) would have had a justification even in other circumstances. After all I was alone, I depended on no one's support, I had to discover my own path, work out my own rule of life. Everything is changed now because I'm not alone any more. I've understood everything and only want to help, to support, to play my part, as far as is in my power.

Write to me, kiss the children and kiss your parents. I'm always close to you.

With infinite hope and love,
Your *Peter*

Faro, 20 December 1938

DARLING MOTHER,

There's not much to say. I can't put my hopes into words. All I hope is that you may have a little peace. And I implore you all to love me as I love you. I'd like to prove my love, not just confine myself to words. I want to do everything, absolutely everything, to be a good son and brother. I'm very close to you now and realise that we can't be separated. You weigh too heavy. Oh, there's nothing I can say. So what can I tell you? Be strong and hold your head high. There's only one thing I think about and that is helping you, helping you all with my whole strength! Perhaps some time you will need me. It would be the best present you could give me.

All my wishes for the new year, and all my hopes for what lies in store for you.

I've just received a letter from Uncle Schr. I won't go into the details, the outrageous insinuations, falsifications, and offensive remarks in this "witty" version of thoughts I've never had and declarations I've never made. I don't intend to hit back. I'm utterly indifferent to what these gentlemen in Germany think about me. And I'm just as indifferent to them personally. It's a long time since I owed any of them anything, and as for the concern they've "always" shown for me, I

[2] Liena, daughter of the Russian ballerina, Tatiana Gsousky, who lived in Berlin.

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utterly repudiate it. Let them go to the devil with their "advice" and leave me in peace. I want nothing from them, nothing, nor from anyone else. As for their suggestions that I hoped to obtain through my letters some kind of "financial share", it's sheer impudence. I don't need anything, as fortunately I've laid my plans better than these gentlemen thought possible of an idle versifier. And I shan't write any more letters "with a philosophical substructure" (what a magnificent expression!) which might upset them. I've learned my lesson. My only regret is that I haven't been able to make *you* understand me—not that it's very important now.

Nevertheless to you, and to you alone, I want to emphasise two things. First, that I wasn't properly informed because I don't read a paper and seldom go to town, so I got to know of events only by chance and after considerable delay. And as I've already told you, the news was pretty vague and I quite simply didn't understand what it was all about. God knows why. Perhaps I was asleep. Or else, being so cut off, I was unable to grasp the novelty of the situation and how it differed from the past. Whether it was all these things combined, or something else, I really don't know. What I do know is that it wasn't in any way a desire not to understand or the selfishness of someone who refuses to see things as they are. The other point: I dread not being able to help you. You know my position, and it's now useless to think it could have been otherwise. I tried in my first letter to tell you something about chances of work. You know I've not learnt any skills so you can understand how limited my possibilities are—at best, and this would need a miracle, they would only keep my head above water. Add to this the fact that up till now and probably for several weeks more my hands have been tied because my position has not yet been regularised from the legal point of view, so that I can't get a work permit of any kind. These are the facts.

So the only thing I can offer is my absolute good will. I can't put at your disposal what I don't have. And unfortunately this is no more than my arms and the small amount of intelligence I know myself to have. If these can be of use to you in any way you only have to say so and I shall come. But even if you don't need me—and I really am powerless at the moment—I would try everything on the practical level so as to help you.

One other thing: in future I shall address myself just to you, your children[3] and your parents. I want to think only of you. I want to show my love only to you, whether you understand me or not and whatever you may think of me. As for the others, they can spare me their advice and their warnings just as for my part I shall do everything I can to forget them. They are of absolutely no interest to me and I reject everything that comes from them. I willingly take on myself the odium of ingratitude, for considering the image they have of me, that no longer enters into our accounts.

As you have shown them my letters up till now, mind you also show them everything I have just said, because it concerns them.

Forgive me, my darlings, for ending like this. I think about you the whole time. I am all yours and kiss you all tenderly.

Your *Peter*

Faro, 20 January 1939

DEAREST MOTHER,

I've been in Lisbon for a fortnight dealing with the business of my work permit which was dragging on endlessly, like all bureaucratic things. Although the trip wasn't very agreeable, because so expensive, it was necessary and at last I've obtained the necessary authorisation.

So I shall give German and English lessons in Olhao and Faro; if I can start on 1 February and get enough pupils, I would take the bus every evening and go into town. I also hope to get translations. But it's all going to take time.

I've had no more news from you! What is your state of mind? Are you bearing up all right? You'll see everything will be all right and you'll laugh later at all your doubts and worries.

Now I want to tell you about a decision I've made, a decision of great importance to me. I intend to be a convert to Judaism. My intention is firm and unshakable. I've given the matter much thought and have come to the conclusion that this is what I must do—to make my position clear and as it should be. I *am* a Jew, I belong to you and yours, and I want to signify outwardly that this is so.[4] I know very well what it involves; I'm setting out along the same road as all the others, and it's a hard one. But why, by what right, should I be privileged. I want no favour, however small. You know what I think, you know how I've always felt a deep affinity with all things Jewish. I see no difference and do not recognise one. For me conversion is natural and necessary . . . I don't want to delay or let myself be deflected any longer. I'm simply fulfilling a duty towards myself. It is not a religious conversion. I know nothing about the Christian religion or the Jewish religion. But Judaism as such is the only form of Jewish life and there's no other

[3] His two half-sisters, Angelika and Bettina, then aged eleven and fifteen.
[4] Circumcision.

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possible way of bearing witness to it. So I shall do all that is possible.

I've had to smile more than once at the strange way Jews have reacted to my decision. They all implore me to go back on it. But always for practical reasons. In any case it's impossible for me to put through the formalities here in Portugal. I talked to a member of the Sephardic community. He harped on my motives and looked at me as if I were some curious kind of animal. Especially as I was a Christian! "We don't accept anyone", he said finally. Then he went off shaking his head. He must be a very good Jew.

So there was only one thing left for me to do (and this involves some practical changes, but of another kind). On 15 January I deposited at the German Consulate in Lisbon a declaration in due form by the terms of which I express my desire to be a convert to Judaism and to carry through this wish just as soon as possible. In the same declaration I asked to be regarded henceforth as a Jew and to be subject to all the laws concerning Jews.

If this declaration is considered valid in Berlin, the letter "J" will be inscribed on my passport and I shall be given "Israel" as a first name.[5] That will make me an emigrant in perpetuity and I shall never be able to return to Germany. And after a while German nationality will be withdrawn from me. That's what they told me at the Consulate.

What the procedure is in these circumstances I don't yet know. In any case the conversion will be official just as soon as a community is prepared to receive me.

My cat, Nicky, has died, if you can believe it. He probably died of food poisoning and it was already too late when I took him to the vet. He died in my arms on the way back from town. Southerners are incredibly cruel where animals are concerned. They weren't at all worried about him but simply said, "Yes, yes, he's going to die, never mind, we'll get you another one." They all laughed when I took him to the vet. I could have killed those women.

Take care of yourself, my dearest, and let me have your news soon. I need it so much! I'm always close to you and I kiss you.

Your *Peter*

Faro, 21 January 1939

DEAREST MOTHER,

Many thanks for your letter. Forgive me for sending this to Liena to pass on to you, but stamps are terribly expensive and I have to economise.

How did your Christmas go? Was it a very hard one for you? For me, a real "celebration" was out of the question, but that didn't really matter. I stayed at home, that is to say with Carmo and her two children, my landlady Rosaria and her daughter, and the servant Antonio—who is simplicity itself. As you see, we're already absolutely united and form as it were a single bloc in the Marina community. In fact I occupy, somewhat against my will, a privileged position, almost patriarchal, and am the object of all sorts of attentions. Moreover since 15 December I've been taking my meals at the family table and Carmo looks after me admirably.

I played the part of Father Christmas and distributed small presents to the great delight of the children who would otherwise have received nothing. I pleased the ladies by giving each of them a photograph of myself at their urgent request. The photographs now adorn the various rooms and are the pride of their possessors. My sack being empty, the festivities would have then come to an end if we hadn't suddenly had the idea of going into town to midnight mass. In this way I heard and saw the first mass of my life. To tell the truth it made a poor impression. The church wasn't really ugly, but the saints with their expressionless faces and clad in gleaming red finery, and especially Saint Sebastian in his knight's armour, are quite intolerable. And there was no sense of awe, everything was too fussy, and the choir had manifestly never heard of rhythm. Only one of the servers, who bobbed up and down like a Shakespearian clown, was remarkable. Yes, there's something odd about the organisation of churches; I saw clearly on this occasion how absurd they basically are, and how little they have to do with God (even the Catholic God).

Nothing special to say about new year. It passed quietly. There's nothing much to say about me either. Things aren't easy, you know, and everything takes a terribly long time. But I shall pull through. When you say that my difficulties are drawing me nearer to the goal, yes, I've known that for some time. I didn't want to protect myself from them, but I had made my own time schedule. That this has been upset is not really important because lots of things have changed. Besides, I'm not losing more than I've won, and if one realises that, then everything that happens is necessary, and what is most unforeseen and seemingly hard to take is precisely what we most need.

Lots of kisses to the children and the grandparents. And to you.

Your *Peter*

[5] One of the "November decrees" promulgated in Nazi Germany after the "Crystal Night" pogrom laid down that all Jews should henceforth have the same first name—Israel for men, Sarah for women.

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IT WAS VERY LATE *when Peter's mother decided to emigrate. The condition for leaving Germany was that she change her nationality. Her husband, Erich Schrobsdorff ("Uncle Schr"), had business relations with Bulgaria—an Axis country allied to Hitler Germany—and he persuaded a Bulgarian bachelor, Dimiter Lingorska, to contract a marriage of convenience with his wife. A marriage of convenience, but endowed—the Bulgarian was paid. The Schrobsdorffs were divorced, and the mother was heartbroken. In order to arouse no suspicions her marriage with Dimiter had to take place in church. Thus she began to study the Russian Orthodox religion and became acquainted with "Father John", a Russian prince who had become a priest. "Father John" exercised such fascination over this Jewish woman on the verge of despair that she soon saw both him and his faith as a way to salvation. A situation that had originally been one of pure opportunism grew into a mystical crisis. She was baptised and married by the priest in the Russian Orthodox Church. For Peter, who was asserting his conversion to Judaism while his mother was embracing the Christian religion, the whole state of affairs was "grotesque."*

Faro, 13 February 1939

DEAR MOTHER,

I'm terribly worried about your nervous depression, even though you say you've got the better of it. Please, please tell me the truth. Are you really better? I implore you to tell me exactly how you are. You can imagine how worried I am. Can't you try to concentrate entirely on the future? In that way you could deaden the present and rob it of its most dangerous influence. You must force yourself not to let it weigh on you more than is necessary. It's the only solution remaining to you, for the consequences in themselves are hardly surprising.

And please, please answer my constant questions about your situation. For me questions haven't merely a generalised and natural interest, but a very immediate one. I've got to know what it's all about. People in our position are always finding themselves faced with decisions that have to be made, which is why we have to start with a clear view of things. I'm sure you don't intend to drive a wedge between us. I personally attach the greatest possible importance to keeping permanently in touch with you, and not only for my sake. But these things don't really need saying. So I ask you very solemnly, and you must be good and answer: what are you going to do with Angelika and Bettina?

As for me I have no plans that are not known to you. I'm staying on here of course and only hope that my "teaching activities" will expand. At the moment they're on a very small scale but that's probably because of Carnival. In March things will look up, at least that's what everyone tells me.

And now to this "grotesque" story.

FIRST OF ALL I want you to know that what really matters (to me, too) is that it has helped you to overcome your depression, helped you to get better, which is what you needed so much. Your health comes before everything.

I wanted to start by making this point—and it's the truth—because there are many other things I want to say and I'm not quite sure what they're going to be.

Your irony is unworthy of you and doesn't touch me on the raw as you thought it would. You oughtn't to make fun of other people's decisions when your own, viewed objectively, could be not so much derided as deplored.

Your irony has something uncontrolled about it. You know very well that you're lying to yourself even when you persistently maintain that it's I who am going in for self-deception. Perhaps you no longer have a choice, perhaps it's become inevitable for you—but it's just the opposite in my case. By this I mean that you cannot do otherwise than look for your salvation in cynicism, as always happens with people who haven't a very solid position.

For—to look at things objectively again—there is no real necessity for baptism. The necessity never existed even in the most barbarous epochs, compared with which ours, in spite of everything, is just a nursery game. You know that, and it's why you take refuge in obscurantism. The step you have taken could be justified at a pinch on one condition only—that it "has no importance really" and is primarily indicative of astute opportunism. For what you think to be your strongest argument is in fact your weakest. Your alleged inclination for Catholicism, the benefit you derive from this "liaison"—which brings you peace and comfort as well as aesthetic satisfaction—has lost its justification. It's all false because it's a choice of the moment, a fact I think you haven't realised. For six years you refrained from doing anything whatever about it because it wasn't "necessary." If you had become a Catholic during that long period then the whole thing would be a simple matter of faith and there would be nothing more to say. But although there's been no question of religious belief for five years, and particularly now, you suddenly remember this outgrown desire of yours and build it up into a supplementary justification. It's obvious that now it can't be, and isn't a matter of belief—with you any more than with me or with anyone else. Because the whole

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question has evolved in a political direction and has become a general question instead of a personal one. It's no longer a matter of Judaism or Christianity but solely of "*Hep-Hep.*"[6]

And this is not aimed at the Jewish *religion*, as in the days of the Inquisition, but at the Jew as such. The order is: *Beat the Jew!* and he's beaten. The Jew can let himself be hit, he can hit back, or he can smile and ask, "What are you doing to me?" He can protest; he can pray; he can be clever and get away; he can be prudent and avoid showing himself in the street in the first place; he can react according to the whole spectrum of human reactions. There's just one thing he can't do. He can't say, I'm not what you think I am. Because he is, and will be so for as long as he lives. Whether he's Jewish or Catholic by religion, whether he's a cosmopolitan or an ardent German patriot, whether he's Lord Beaconsfield or Moses Mosessohn of the Frankfurter Strasse, whether he loves, hates, accepts, glories in, or execrates his Jewishness, whether he has twenty Jewish grandparents or . . . is a half-Jew, he is always a Jew and it's always a special "*Hep-Hep*" that sounds in his ears. He can borrow someone else's mask, slip into someone else's skin, but the essential is elsewhere. The essential is that we remain Jews whatever transformation we may have undergone. There is something inside us, something that can't be put into words, a residue in the very depths of our soul—perhaps nothing more than an unconscious memory or a strange subterranean awareness, something we could never express but which we all feel, you, me, all the others, and which ceaselessly and continuously operates. Even if you abandon your Judaism, even if you want to cast it off as a snake sheds its skin, that ultimate residue will still be there inside you. And I can be as non-Jewish as you like, as blond inwardly as a *goy*, but the residue is in me just as much. In that respect we are totally equal.

And from the fact that we are Jews, and that any religious particularism is altogether extraneous, whether mine as it were from birth, or yours recently acquired, everything comes down to a question of attitude. And in this we differ, we find ourselves on two planes, this time with no link at all.

YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING and how to answer for it before your conscience. If you had to protect yourself, if it was necessary . . . but as it is, I can't understand you. No doubt I'm too young. I can't enter into your thoughts nor into this type of "prudence." Forgive me, Mother, I ask your forgiveness a thousand times, you know me, I'm quite different, and why not tell you that I'm terribly distressed that you've done this. It has happened so unexpectedly and I had never envisaged such a possibility. Which is why I've delayed so long in answering your letter. I've done a lot of thinking, started to write several times, hoping that eventually I would find an explanation that would shed light on you in my eyes. But I've found nothing. I just can't understand you. But whatever I say and whatever you think, one thing remains. You can be the world's most fervent Catholic, you can execrate your Jewish blood, you can detest all things Jewish, but one thing remains. Unless you succeed in tearing everything away from yourself and ceasing to be one. But *to be* one, and yet *to say*, no, I'm not one—I'm sorry, it just won't do.

It's possible, Mother, that I shouldn't write to you like this. But you have been too frank with me for me not to know that it's not just a superficial formality with you, but that it's deep, very deep, to the point of rejection. I could have wished, wished with all my heart, that you'd not been so frank. You can tell me that I'm blinkered and chauvinistic, you can treat me as a Don Quixote, but, don't you see, one can believe oneself to be above all rules, to be a Fouché or a Mephistopheles, one can deny God and the world (I personally deny much more than you—religion and fatherland), and yet an Absolute exists that depends neither on our consent nor our denial, an Absolute where words no longer signify, where pride and personal honour are wishy-washy notions because they strut and swagger like shop-walkers—look, look, what a fine fellow I am! An Absolute that constitutes our innermost being and the very core of this being, which eludes our judgment and understanding, which is *given* like our life, like the world, primordial realities for us, unassailable and inexpressible. And this Jewish proclamation of my being is for me and inside me the most *absolute* thing I could ever imagine and feel, just as outside me God, the divine, is not something which takes Yes or No for an answer, which can be shoved off merely with an "I believe" or an "I don't believe."

And this is why I can't go against myself, you see, and force myself to understand a human being in whom this sense is lacking, even if that human being is my mother. Given that all this is so clear to me, and that my reaction seems to me more natural than any behaviour of mine in the past, I find it inconceivable that anyone could even mention the possibility of choice.

You know what my attitude would be on this point where strangers are concerned. But you are my mother and I love you and shall never stop

[6] The rallying cry of Nazi storm troopers pursuing Jews in the streets.

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looking for an explanation. I don't want to believe what I would have to believe following from all that I have said, and I beg you, I really earnestly beg you, to give me an answer that will enable me to see things in a different light. At first I meant to say, let's not discuss it. But that is impossible. So please, please explain yourself—perhaps it's you who's right and I'm the fool, I could wish for nothing better—and if you can't explain yourself now, then say that you will later, when we next meet.

PERHAPS YOU UNDERSTAND ME rather better now. I didn't make my decision so as to become a different person (I know I'll never be a Jew in the way you imagine), nor so as to be useful to anyone nor even so as to fight (a Don Quixote, you say. But how? I'm not fighting). That's not the point; you're so wrong. I don't want to shed my skin, like you. I'm not adopting a new religion, I'm not changing course in midstream. *I am a Jew and I say so*, just as I have always done. Is that strange, is that new? With others, everyone knows that they're Jews and they don't need to publish the fact. But with me it isn't known, and this is why I have to proclaim it. These things go without saying, Mother, because, do what you will, you will never be able to suppress the fact that I have a Jewish mother. You say it may harm me if I don't hide what I am. Should I therefore think awry? What would be the sense in that? I wasn't faced with a choice that had to be made, I wasn't compelled to adopt a point of view. I did what was for me the most natural thing in the world, what went without saying. Inward clarity/outward clarity, challenge/response. One point, that's all. I've stayed the same, Mother, and that's what matters. And tell me, please, how could I possibly be one sometimes, and not be one at other times, and all solely for reasons of expediency?

And it's on this note that I shall finish: I belong to a group of people who lead a particular kind of life. It behoves them not to conceal this particularity, but rather to reveal it. There's no merit attached to it; it's simply a historical fact stretching over thousands of years. The nations can do what they like; they have the power and they make us feel it. We have to endure it, each in his own way. One thing only depends on us: the path along which we must pass, with our heads held high, in the consciousness of being not only marked out but honoured (an honour that should entail not pride, but duty) and . . . in humanity. The answer won't long be delayed. It will be given one day, perhaps by many, perhaps by only very few among us.

As for Uncle Schr, he finished his letter with the ominous phrase, "My decision is irrevocable." What decision, in heaven's name? Did the "Old Man" seriously think I would ever go back to Germany? And so I too remain unshakable. If I still had to thank him for something or other, it's now done.

And now, dearest, let me remind you of your promise to send me a photograph of you. I wish you all much happiness, and you personally so many good things . . . and stand fast! And no more stories about depression, do you hear? I kiss you with all my love.

Your *Peter*

Faro, 18 February 1939

DEAR MOTHER,

Once again you haven't understood me and haven't realised what I'm after. Strange! You always pride yourself on being such a good psychologist! This time your psychology is at fault so I must speak more plainly. It appears that I'm not sufficiently alone even now—there are still too many people meddling in my affairs without being asked. What I want is to be forgotten. I want to be free, do you understand? So free that my life and actions belong only to myself and won't be endlessly discussed, criticised, approved of, censured. People can chatter away as much as they like, but let them leave me in peace. Above all, don't imagine that I mind their opinion of me, good God no! I couldn't care less what they think, what any of them think: Uncle Schr, Father, Enie,[7] Aunt Lucy, the lot. Their advice irritates me, so do their letters; it's always the same thing. I haven't the slightest desire to explain my position. Just tell me this: by what right do they interfere in my affairs and tell me lies about my life and what I ought to be doing? What do they know about what I ought to be doing? I'm not in the least cross, I'm just amazed at the vast "wisdom" of these people.

Perhaps even you haven't yet grasped my point: I don't want to have anything more to do with them, not because they don't understand me—that's of no importance whatever—but because I'm not interested in making myself understood. I don't want to get any more letters or write them. They're living their life and I'm living mine. What concern is it of theirs whether I'm working, whether I've got "plans", whether I'm living as a crook or a beggar? Their phrase—"We only want your good"—it makes me puke. Do you know what my dream is? To find a place where no one knows me, where there's no post office, where I'm completely alone. Not to hear anyone talked about, not to know about anyone else and even to be forgotten—forgotten for good or only

[7] Enie: Peter's father's second wife.

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seemingly so. Not to say anything, not to explain anything, to do what the moment dictates. To live according to my mood, like this today, like that tomorrow, without yesterday or tomorrow, without links or obligations, without plans or projects for the future—to live, to live. No useless baggage, no memories, no points of reference. To feel free, without possessing anything, without being possessed, a tramp like Villon, like Rimbaud. To live with the day, with the night, to live and be constantly awake, to live and write. . . .

Yes, I'd like to be Rimbaud, to go to Africa or any other unknown country far away; to live there and forget all about the vacuities, absurdities, inferiorities, presumptions, complacencies great or small, the whole pompous edifice based on lying, self-esteem, convention, meanness, pettiness, violence, and crime that is called Europe, that sophisticated piece of machinery that kills and slaughters with every turn of the wheel, and each of whose parts—call it society, city, state, civilisation or anything else—is an abyss of falsehood and bankruptcy, nothing but a corpse because they've murdered the last hope within it. I want to forget all that, as Rimbaud did; I don't want to know about it. I would like to say with him: *Je regrette l'Europe*, because life, the world, and truth are elsewhere and because I'm lucky enough to know it and take action in consequence. . . . Portugal is no more than a lamentable compromise.

I'm alarming you perhaps and you're going to accuse me of selfishness again. And perhaps you're right, because in other times I would have left you one fine day, both of you, you understand, you and Liena, after a last look and without turning round. And I would have gone far, much farther than I came five months ago, and you would never have heard of me again. Or I would have gone now, after a time of trial, and probably still farther and more secretly. But I would always have freed myself with the same consequence and nothing could have held me back. For the desire for freedom would have been stronger, stronger than love and the community; stronger than anything, I feel it.

But today all that's a dream. The constellation is different, even in me. I neither can nor want to leave you. Something stronger than ourselves and even our wildest desires binds us together. We must always be there for each other's sake, ready at any moment to turn round and do what we can. I have realised this and am organising myself accordingly. So the union with you both is quite natural.

THAT ALL THIS HAS NOTHING to do with love is obvious. Just as the desire to break away does not stem from a lack of love, so today's unconditional union is not caused by a surplus of love. The emotion is always the same, and who could love you more than I do, and by whom could Liena be loved more than by me? No, this aspiration towards freedom (which does not exclude a deep and sincere love, for I would have come back one day) and towards true isolation (what is my present one?), this selfishness if you like, is a requirement within me and has its source somewhere else. But there's no question of my not renouncing a little of this freedom. Except for you two and a few others, I have gone away irrevocably and shall never return. The others can forget me, they can go to hell. Have I made myself clear? You tell me I hurt people. But this simply doesn't matter to me. If they can't bear the simple truth, that's their affair. My links with them no longer have any value for me. So it hasn't the slightest importance whether I break them or not. Breaking is easier. It's childish of you to argue that this will harm me. I no longer live in their universe, so there's no need for me to take my cue from them. I'm doing things that I regard as right and I don't want others to criticise them, for they concern no one but me. I don't depend on anyone, I can stand on my own feet, what more do you want?

But on one point I can put your heart at rest: These thoughts have certainly not come to me because I'm poor or unhappy or think I'm "on the wrong tack" (oh Mother . . .). Everything is going to my greatest satisfaction and I'm doing excellently. I'm being absolutely honest and not telling lies; you needn't have the slightest worry about me or my future. You know what my activities are. You'll know more about them later. I'm only just starting.

You've been a very bad psychologist in all this, Mother dear. What you call arrogance is simply a desire not to be pestered any more. It's self-defence, not distress, that's all.

As for your advice that I should go back on my decision, it strikes a completely false note after my last letter.

Take care of yourself, Mother, and answer quickly. And don't worry, all will be well. It's my grandparents who are having to endure the most, but not for long I hope. Kiss them a thousand times for me. I love them so much.

Do come here, it would be marvellous, and the best and healthiest thing that the earth could give you at the moment. You'd store up strength for years, and you'd arrive at just the right season and have your beloved sun from morning till night. And I'm sure we'd manage to explain ourselves to each other on various points—which is not without its importance.

How delighted I would be, imagine it! Give

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my love to the children and a thousand loving wishes to you, and a big hug.

Your *Peter*

Have you seen Liena by any chance?

Faro, 19 March 1939

MOTHER DARLING,

News from you at last. I'd been waiting and waiting! A thousand thanks for your two letters, a thousand thanks for your explanations, a thousand thanks for your final words—it's good, it's right, there's nothing bad in it.

And now we won't discuss it any more—at least not by letter. I understand now how things developed within you until they became a necessity, and all my fears have now vanished. I realise that you had to arrive at that point. The fact that I would have been incapable of it myself is neither here nor there. But why should we suppose that we're exactly alike?

The essential thing is that your decision, which certainly wasn't an easy one for you to make (as at first I feared it was, because I couldn't interpret your words otherwise—I know now that there was no cynicism on your part), is fully justified by the fact that you have become a believer.

In this respect I can't pretend to follow you through to the end. Because the essence of religion, namely adoration, is completely foreign to me. That the divine exists is obvious; it doesn't even admit of discussion, it's a primordial truth encompassing all the meaning and all the beauty of the world. But the relationship with God, the distance between the human and the divine—if we want to speak figuratively—is the infinite variable which we are always trying to determine. And for me religion has no value because it is a mediation that distances rather than brings near; indeed it has so many images and laws outside the immediate divine that it would take a whole lifetime to learn them and understand them. Thus religion becomes an end in itself, and this at once robs it of any *raison d'être*.

In my opinion there is no institution that has created so many difficulties as the Church regarding man's need to go to God, in other words to live with him and in him, to be as close to him or far from him as to one's own innermost life. A society that preaches God's anger and the fear one should feel before him is, in my view, a society incapable of saying—if only summarily—what the divine is. And when this society wants to celebrate his love and prove it, it is still more removed from his essence, if this is possible. For God is one of those strange beings who do not love but can only be loved.

But what I have just said is not really of capital importance. In the final analysis what we believe doesn't matter much. What matters is that things should acquire a meaning only if they have a centre. Something by which the significance we attach to them equals our obligations towards them. That's all we really need. You believe—that's fine! You have found a teaching that gives you peace and serenity. You are detached from the things of here below—that's splendid! You have met a Father John—you admire him and you've become humble. What unexpected outcomes!

NO, THERE'S NOTHING BAD in it. But that's no reason why you should disown, and this you won't do. I knew you wouldn't. Because that's the second essential point: the "general question." It's something altogether independent of your faith and your aversion to Judaism. No one wants you to experience joy where you don't experience it and to love what you don't love. There is nevertheless a loyalty that we must observe at all costs. It is our highest duty and that goes for you too. There is the absolutely elementary fact of being beaten and the obligation to respond—and there is also the beautiful word "brotherhood." This word says nothing to you in this context, you feel nothing—fair enough, there's nothing to be done about that, because people are different. But one certainly has a right to ask you for loyalty.

As for your two epithets—"proclamation" and "display"—they are caricatures of my thought and I want to tell you this: there are times in life when we are obliged not only to see things clearly but to state them clearly. You no doubt forget that marriage and a blessing are also "proclamations." You also forget that I didn't want to expound my point of view at the Consulate. All I wanted to do was to make use of the means at my disposal to put an end to a "legal" distinction —which was only right. Moreover, I don't think I'm behaving altogether mistakenly if I can show by my example what a Jew is, or perhaps what a Jew *also* is, at a time when only vileness is law.

What you say about "my country" falls absolutely flat. It is not my country, and never will be. I owe Germany nothing but my mother tongue—which is, I admit, a lot, and the only thing which I am able or willing to preserve. So if you can approve my decision, because it is necessary, as I can yours, because it is necessary to you, we shall at any rate have obtained unconditional respect for our opposing goals.

Let me repeat that I understand you and that I no longer hold anything against you. If there's anything further to say about it then we can discuss it when we meet and put an end to the question.

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What a glorious hope that is! Will you come? Oh please, please do. You can't begin to imagine how much I long to see you. I can't really think about anything else.

And do rest assured that the tide will soon turn. You mustn't take too black a view of things, all will change.

I don't really know what I ought to say about Dimiter. Events come crowding in and any conventional congratulations would be absurd. Naturally my ardent wish is that this union will bring you nothing but happiness. I've never met him, which is why we shall wait a little. I shall always be a friend to him.

There's one thing in your letter that astonished me: You're celebrating something. What's it all about—celebrating? What are you celebrating? I just can't remember what on earth it can be.

Please do go and see Liena and Tatiana. It's a long time since I heard from Liena. I have no idea what's happening. It makes me very sad that she doesn't write, and I'm frightened. I love her as much as ever, even more. She is my only woman. From the moment I first got to know her I've never given a thought to anyone else, and ever since I left Germany I've been what is called faithful to her. With complete freedom, without doing any violence to myself.

And now, Mother dear, you mustn't be distressed. We're always together. I see that now more clearly than ever before. Oh how I long to talk to you!

As for me, I'm well though perhaps a little tired. My cat, Ariel, is a source of indescribable joy. Last Sunday I went to the sea for the first time and it was gorgeous.

All my love, my little Mother . . . and as you know, I'm waiting for you to come. I kiss you a thousand times.

Always your *Peter*

My love to the grandparents and the children. I shall write to Uncle Schr.

Faro, 26 April 1939

DARLING MOTHER,

Many thanks for your two letters, the photographs, and the grammars—which you shouldn't have bought new. I haven't answered till today because your last letter, the one with the Bulgarian address, was at the post office for five days without my knowing.[8]

Your letter frightened me. And so you've got out, that's obvious. Where will it stop? I'm clinging to the hope that the days that followed the posting of this SOS were easier for you, and that your distress was primarily due to the journey, the separations, the novelty, the unknown. I understand your misgivings and your depression better than anyone. And I am so close to you that it's unthinkable that you shouldn't feel it. But you must wait, Mother, and get a little bit calm. It's no good wanting to understand everything all at once. No one can explain everything to you. You must let a little while pass without thinking about anything—just let things be—and anyway how do you know things are going against you? Who is telling you that they're not going in your favour and are not taking care of you—you who have arrived so totally unprovided for? You must show a little patience, just a little. I know it's difficult and that you're thoroughly disoriented, but you have no other choice. Is there ever a period in our life when we don't have to give proof of patience? I experience this every day and in sufferings for which I'm grateful; patience is everything.

Liena has written, and what I foresaw has indeed happened. For her this is quite natural, she had to follow this path. One day she will perhaps realise that there are more important things than surrendering everything to love on the pretext that it's too strong to resist.

But, as you rightly point out, this experience is not of great importance to me. Not only is it not new, but I was absolutely certain that I would have to go through it a second time. It couldn't have been otherwise and I was in full knowledge of the facts when I departed. And this although she was my greatest love. Today I have been in a certain sense set free, for when all is said and done I was giving myself not so much to Liena as to love. Do you understand what I mean? And Liena couldn't take love from me, for my love was not only for her but for many other things too. Consequently I'm absolutely calm and in fact not much has changed. So we won't talk about it any more.

Now, Mother, would it be a good idea if I came to live with you? What do you think? My longing to see you has never been so great. We could go forward side by side, couldn't we, and be stronger together? Couldn't we live together, live solely for each other? How I should love to live only for you! Don't you think we could both begin a new life—I mean, new between you and me? I feel that I could be much closer to you than I am to myself.

Think about it very seriously. I'd come and you'd no longer be alone; we'd live together and work together if possible. If not, we'd work on our own. And you would have a son and a friend, I would be with you and if you wanted to cry I wouldn't let you.

[8] Peter's mother emigrated to Bulgaria in April, 1939. Her two daughters remained in Berlin. They joined her—one at a time so as not to attract attention—a little later.

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I'm fully aware that I'd have to give up many things if I came to you, on the other hand I now realise that I absolutely must come and live with you if you don't come to me. It's impossible for me to have peace unless I know that peace has returned to you.

What is certain is that you won't make me change my mind. I shall become a Jew. That's decided. Henceforth you can only approve or disapprove. My wishes for Pesach weren't addressed to you but to my grandparents. Don't think that I'm going to torment you by saying again what I've said before. I'm sorry that my words could have given grounds for such an interpretation. As regards Bettina, you won't be able to keep it from her—she'll know the truth one day.[9] But let's leave that for the moment.

Write to me quickly. And don't lose courage. And please tell me everything that happens to you. My love for you is infinite, as always. Millions of kisses.

Your *Peter*

Faro, 5 May 1939

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

You can imagine what incredible delight today's letter from you has given me. A very different story from two weeks ago! Calm and happy! You've taken an immense weight from my mind. I had been so afraid for you. I thought you wouldn't be able to pull through by yourself. Good, so all is now more or less in order and you will see your doubts and fears disappearing as you get more accustomed to your new life; soon you will feel that you've never lived anywhere else but Bulgaria. And soon you'll go to Varna, and you'll have the children with you again and also the "Old Man", and what more could you want? My dear one, my sweet one, it's all like a comedy, like a puppet-show. Reunions, joy, life together, separation, farewells, sorrow, then reunions again—just like clockwork.

I've heaps of questions to ask you and you absolutely must answer them, whether clearly or not. Why in fact did you not come here? First you wrote that we would see each other soon, then that there were no more difficulties "now"—and I was happier than I'd ever been before (quite apart from the important fact that we had to explain so many things to each other)—and then—I'm in Sofia. Just that, without comment, as if it were the most natural thing in the world. I really don't understand you. I quite agree that, at the moment, we have to give up pleasure trips because I don't imagine either of us has the money for that. So the question is very simple: Do you want to have me with you? Can I be of any practical use to you? And is there any possibility of entering Bulgaria as a German Jew? Mind you answer these questions. Are you unwilling or unable to have me, or is it simply preferable that I shouldn't come? Let me know.

This is what happens when everyone goes his own way. I don't know whether you're working, how things stand with the children, or what the situation is in general. I know absolutely nothing. Please do give me as clear and detailed an account of events as you can; I really want to be in the know. Is this asking too much? As for me, I shall now tell you how *I* live.

I get up between eight and nine o'clock, say good-morning to Ariel and out we go together to greet the six little pigs, the two little goats, a dog, Nero, as ugly as he is amiable, and a whole farmyard that besieges me as Hannibal did poor Rome. Then I swallow a cup of what Rosaria calls coffee, together with two slices of bread and margarine. That's my breakfast and it never varies. It's already a long time since I forgot the taste of butter.

The day having started, I find myself faced with a very difficult choice: Whether to go to the office at ten or eleven. (In the past—that is to say before 1 May—things were quite different, as I had to arrive at half past nine, work until twelve, kill as best I could the two hours' break for lunch and then work again till six or later.) But on the first day of May I let my boss know that the two hours' break in the middle of the day was absolutely unacceptable as far as I was concerned, that I could gulp down my meal in ten minutes, and that the break interrupted my day in a thoroughly tiresome way. He accepted this and so it was agreed that I would cut down the famous break to half an hour and start work either at ten in the morning and finish at five in the afternoon, or at eleven and finish at six. So I have a little free time which at the moment I use for writing letters, but soon I shall take advantage of it, if the Portuguese spring permits (more about that spring later), to go to the sea—either in the morning or the evening.

At the office (there are three of us plus an errand boy) I am a prop and pillar to my boss. Though engaged as translator for the foreign correspondence, I'm occupied almost exclusively with Portuguese (I write letters which I submit to the boss for correction before I type them). From time to time a letter arrives in English or German. I should have mentioned that my boss is absolutely mad about organisation, every day he enacts new "rules" and behaves as if he's got at least a hundred people under his orders. And so I've got a "Department" all to myself. I won't

[9] The two daughters did not know that their mother was Jewish.

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go into details, for, as far as sardines, anchovies, the shapes and sizes of preserving-tins, advertising, bills, commissions, and exports go—in short everything to do with this commercial activity of primary importance—you know as little as I once did. Let me say only this—that Moroccan competition just doesn't exist, because *our* sardines are so much fatter! And as for poor quality oil, well that doesn't really matter much. The essential thing is "organisation"—and the fact that "in the Portuguese tinned fish industry, our firm is reputed to be one of the best" (my boss's favourite sentence).

There. So I work flat out for about six-and-a-half hours to keep our "reputation" at pitch point. The boss is kind and cultivated, which is rare here. Sometimes he invites me to his home. He has six children: three sweet little girls, two boys of fifteen and sixteen (who aren't allowed on the simplest excursion, for fear they might drink unfiltered water on the way), and an older daughter who spends her time trying to get married. His wife is ravishing, but he is unfaithful to her, as is the custom. The whole family lives in a horrible house; however, they have a much larger and nicer villa on the outskirts. But it would take the mother and daughter *ten minutes* to get to the centre from there. Just imagine!

TO RETURN TO ME. At twelve I go to the post-office, then to the newspaper kiosk (it's cheaper). When work is over I take the bus back to Marina where Ariel and Nero are waiting for me. I pull an easy chair out on to my flowery verandah and do anything or nothing. At half past seven I begin to argue with Rosaria about the possibility of dining before nine, and this sometimes happens, when she's in a good mood.

You will have noticed that I no longer have a woman to clean for me. Not since December. I do the cleaning myself on Sundays and sometimes, very rarely, Carmo comes and does my washing. I'm on very good terms with her, we're always helping each other out, and we don't pay the slightest attention to the malicious gossip our relationship arouses. But my favourite is her daughter Sarah; she has recently had measles and, to cheer her up, I gave her a dress that has thrown the whole family into perplexity as to my good taste. I've lost all credit in this domain anyway since introducing into my room a photograph of a naked man from the Sistine Chapel and some "death's heads" (that's what Carmo calls my photographs of Verlaine and Rilke and a reproduction of Queen Nefertiti).

Nearly every day I give English lessons from eight to nine in the evening. After which I go to bed and read. Stendhal's *The Red and the Black*, Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, de Coster's *Eulenspiegel* and *Leonardo da Vinci* by Merezhkovsky are my most recent reading. From time to time I dip into some history of literature, then *Faust* and *Hamlet*, but not to the end. In a disorderly way, higgledy-piggledy. I've read and reread Rimbaud's fine poems, didn't really understand *Saison en enfer* and *Illuminations*, I mean I'm not capable of rising to such heights. Rilke very seldom, but always with the same delight. I can't understand people not liking him. He's one of those pure poets of whom there aren't many. To go to him in a secular frame of mind is impossible.

I've hardly done any writing since 1 March. It's sad and every day I reproach myself for it. But I can't force myself when I'm tired. And that's my trouble: I'm often very tired. Everything requires effort and I need a lot of sleep—in this I'm my father's son. If it happens that I'm still awake at one o'clock in the morning I feel it very keenly the next day. It's ridiculous really because I'm in good health and in fact I'm extremely well. The devil alone knows what makes me incapable of doing anything at all after a certain hour at night. Yet it's unfortunately true; there are Balzac and the others.

As usual I'm more or less alone and haven't any real companion. Now and again a young man from Olhao visits me in the evening, or I go to see him. We chat until late at night and, when I go and see him, we sometimes listen to music on the radio. He isn't very interesting but he's kind and obliging. He works at the town hall where he has my affairs in hand and does all he can to help me; so our friendship is valuable to me from the practical point of view. I am in fact on very good terms with all the administration and am allowed to come and go as I will even in the holiest of holies. That's a great quality of the Portuguese: they are always friendly and prepared to do one a service. Never once has anyone been rude to me. If only I could say that of the Germans! If ever a Portuguese is discourteous, it's not through ill-will, but thoughtlessness.

Their eternal remark when they address me is, "But you speak Portuguese so well already." Indeed I do speak it fairly fluently, though my vocabulary is very limited and I'm not yet able to express what I want to say when the conversation is on a high level. Portuguese constructions are very special and cause enormous worry to anyone lacking a deep knowledge of the language. But it's a beautiful language and it makes you lose the taste for Spanish—though you can't bear to admit it at first. You get used to its gentle modulations so quickly that the hard Spanish consonants come to seem forced, exactly like Dutch to us Germans. In fact I'm incapable of saying a single sentence in Spanish now, though

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I read it easily, a facility which the resemblance between the two languages makes possible while making it impossible to speak the other. A pity!

You want to know what I'm earning. Well, I've moved on from four to six hundred escudos, that is as much as the accountant and more than my friend in the town hall. It's rare here to pay salaries higher than six hundred escudos, so I've nothing to complain of [. . . .]

Your *Peter*

Faro, 31 May 1939

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

If only you knew the joy and happiness your letters give me, although they could hardly be called cheering! But I've often said before and shall never tire of repeating, I'm so close to you, Mother, and I think only of you, always. Then when you talk to me I'm happy and possessed with the one desire to be with you. I miss you so much! And if you say again that I don't think well of you, if you attribute my delay in writing to that sort of nonsense, then I'll get very cross. You must never make suppositions like that, never, do you understand? I always think about you in the same way and you couldn't possibly wish for a better.

When I think over what you've written to me I always come to the same conclusion: we must try very hard to join each other and then stay together. I see no other solution for casting out your wild misgivings and convincing you that what you've done is right.

You're not really capable of living alone, and so you oughtn't to be doing it. Not only because you're a woman, but also because there's no earthly need, no earthly reason, internal or external, which compels you to adopt a life of solitude. You don't want to, and you're perfectly right not to want to, so we must try to change what can be changed. It's difficult but not beyond our reach provided we have a firm will and a steadfast intention.

And this is why all that I shall undertake in the future will have one sole purpose: to build up a life together at no matter what price. I shan't do anything more just for myself, but only for *us*. I shall try everything in my power. How, where and when you mustn't ask me just now. I can only give you this assurance: you have my utterly unconditional help and my efforts will never waver. For your good first and foremost, but just as much for the good of both of us. Dearest Mother, you must be patient, patient with me, patient with yourself, patient with others, and you must stop complaining, stop thinking you are to blame, stop inveighing against men and destiny. You must accept the facts as they are and not as catastrophic upheavals. Which in any case they are not. You are ungrateful, Mother, and you don't realise how lucky you are not to have to live in Germany, in that wasteland, that intellectual morass, much more evil than the worst of violence and so dangerous that it poisons even reasonable men who, after a sufficient amount of "conditioning", are tempted to follow their model and rate high what is low and lose sight of the eternal human values. It is sad, infinitely sad, that a man like my father should spend his life writing plays for the people. It will always be a mystery to me how cultivated men can endure it and don't do all in their power to escape from that prison and exchange a guaranteed livelihood (relative though it is) for intellectual freedom and some form of human responsibility. But we shall leave that, because in your opinion I'm prejudiced; please God that others may have my prejudice, then perhaps we'll be able to get something done.

And then I'd like to answer you with your own words: Think of all the people, all the Jews, who are much worse off than you, who are hungry and don't even know where to lay their heads. Who haven't seen their children for years. Whose loved ones are perhaps dead or in the hands of the torturers. You're ungrateful, Mother!

And if you say that you have created your own unhappiness and should never have emigrated, then try to imagine exactly what the alternative would have been. What would have happened?

No, no, my dearest Mother, I know everything, I take account of everything, and I also understand you very well. It is hard for you, harder than for many others, and yet infinitely less hard than might have been feared. And you mustn't forget that. Nor that we are living according to new arrangements and that the old ones are no longer appropriate. That too is a fact.

And then you mustn't allow your doubts about yourself to work themselves up into an inferiority complex. It's utterly ridiculous. It is obvious that in a situation like yours you are not in a position to take on anything new. In order to do that you would first have to become free and rediscover that confidence which alone brings stability. But you're sailing with a strong list. Which means that you need help and there's only one thing for you to do: accept this help and don't make it too difficult. And in this way all reflections on your incapacity become superfluous. I'm convinced that if you had someone beside you who was urging you to start work, you would find all the strength, energy and skill you need to bring any task you might choose to a successful conclusion.

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SO PLEASE TRY TO pull yourself together enough to be able to say when the decisive moment comes: here I am, what's to be done? Get rid of everything that weighs you down, and hope with me. You'll have your children with you soon and perhaps with God's help we'll manage to free my grandparents. Have patience!

I don't really know about the situation in Bulgaria, though I had always assumed that from the political point of view it wasn't exactly wise to go to the East which is more or less, as you yourself say, under German influence. But as you seem to look on Bulgaria as only a stepping stone, it isn't impossible that between now and your departure the situation will remain unchanged. Do please let me know at once about your intentions and about all the arrangements you may make regarding them. You can't go on making decisions without consulting me, you can't just present me with accomplished facts. Let me repeat for the hundredth time: a permanent contact between us is indispensable.

My deliberations and proposals with a view to emigrating to Bulgaria thus no longer hold good for they were based on false premises. In a general way, when you say that I don't really visualise the reality, I can only answer: You purposely omitted to give me the necessary information. Meanwhile, I have more or less got to know the facts. Finally, I still hope to ascertain on what money you're living. Please give me a detailed answer.

Today is Liena's birthday, and it's now exactly a year since we exchanged "rings." What moonshine! I've already moved very far from all that, and it's only now and again . . . but that doesn't matter any more. What did happen still lives.

My darling little Mother, hold on and don't judge things wrong. You still have a lot in front of you. A day will come when you won't understand yourself any more. And believe me, we two, you and me, you understand, shall come through. Be calm and know that I shall do everything for you and that I love you more than the whole world. And salvation, interior salvation, always comes only from within ourselves.

Your *Peter*

Faro, 8 June 1939

DEAREST MOTHER,

Are you still as unhappy as you were? When are the children arriving? Today is Tina's birthday and let's hope she is happy [. . . .]

Next Sunday I'm invited to a wedding and it will be dreadfully jolly. God, how liberated we are.

Oh, and I miss music terribly! If only I could listen to a concert. Do you know I'd start studying music even now if I could. Absolutely seriously. It's ridiculous anyway to be so ignorant. I ought to study history, the history of art, philosophy. So many things I ought to do [. . . .] You said a very beautiful thing in one of your letters: "God is a great artist. Life is organised so wisely that everything in it has its compensation, and finally death itself will seem so close one day that you will not feel it as difficult, but as something good and necessary." I'm sure you're right, though I personally can't yet envisage a time when I shall cease to hate and fear death. I'm terribly afraid of it, I must admit, and I think it's a huge sin that men should gamble their lives in war, in suicide, or simply through carelessness. For this life has been given them for fulfilment in its own terms, however hard it may be, and not with a view to another. Each life has as its goal to produce something living, something autonomous, and that is why the artistic life seems to me the truest and the most justified, for it leaves behind—in the purest, most valid and most manifest way—something that endures or at least strives to do so.

I long for an answer from you, my dearest, and I'm always thinking of you. Take care of yourself, and may everything turn out for the best for you in Varna. Goodbye my . . . my woman, and try not to worry. This is my hourly prayer. I kiss you.

Your *Peter*

Faro, 26 June 1939

DARLING MOTHER,

What special thing should I wish for you on your birthday? I'm afraid of becoming unbearably repetitive, because everything I've got to say to you I've said already in one form or another: whether wishes, longings, hopes. So how can I highlight this particular day in the way that custom requires? Should I say that I'm thinking about you with my whole strength? But I've only one way of thinking about you. Or that I'm dying with longing to see you? But this longing never leaves me. Or that I would like to give you all that's best in the world and to know that you're calm and smiling? But you know full well that this is my only wish. Or that I love you and that you are first and foremost in my life? But you know this too. So what can I say to make this day stand out from others on which you already have the first of my thoughts? And how could today's thoughts and wishes be more tender than usual, since every day and every hour I give you my fondest love? So you see it's not easy for me to enshrine this date with a special halo. For me it's your birthday every day and that's the present I give you.

Many thanks for your letter which again had been long awaited. All seems to be well; you're

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getting used to things, you're more cheerful, you don't feel so generally oppressed. I'm glad that you're meeting people, that you're regaining your eye for beauty, that you're gradually becoming the good old "*Schnuff*"![10] A letter like this makes me so happy! Go along these lines, Mother, and soon you'll have forgotten why you ever regretted emigration. And how about the children and my grandparents? We'll find a solution, all will be possible. A little time, a little patience.

As for what you tell me about the children and their life in Germany, I entirely endorse what you say. They're becoming thoroughly spoiled and are losing all sense of judgment. And that's what we should at least preserve. All the joy and love they're receiving counts as nothing by comparison. It is bad, it is suspect, it is dangerous in the highest degree to be happy in Germany. There's tribulation in Germany, and this is how it ought to be and this is how it's right to be. We must change our ways of thinking, we must be partisans, under pain of losing ourselves. Objectivity is a poison when there's suffering. We mustn't be silent. While your children are having a good time and enjoying life, hundreds of Jews aboard a ship near the South American coast have been refused permission to land by all the countries of that continent and are signing a declaration saying they will commit suicide if they are sent back to Germany. That's what we should be thinking about and nothing else.

Tell me, have you really considered what's going to happen to Grandmother and Grandfather? Have you really visualised their situation? If you ask me, something must be done. They can't possibly go on living as they are. How much longer shall we have them? Can't you really do anything for them? Or are you already working something out? If only I were in a position to help, I don't know what would be the most important thing for me to do. But in fact I'm not free. Couldn't we have a proper discussion about it? You mustn't think that what I'm saying is just hot air; concern for these poor prisoners haunts me night and day. We are now happy and outside while they, who have given us their love, must endure persecution alone. Is this right? Shouldn't we do everything to get them out? Isn't this our first and most pressing duty, quite apart from the love we feel for them? I think it is. I shall come back to this in my next letter.

Darling Mother, I wish you a happy stay in Varna. And I kiss you with all my love.

Always your *Peter*

Faro, 7 November 1939

DEAREST MOTHER,

So I didn't see my good, dear Grandfather again after all! I always hoped and always thought I'd somehow get there in time. And now he's dead, so alone, so terribly alone! I can't tell you how agonisingly deeply I feel it. You say in your letter that I mustn't be sad, because all is well with him. But I don't believe all was well with him when he died, I think on the contrary that he cried a great deal inwardly at dying so alone and abandoned. Because there was only Grandmother with him. None of the others he had loved and lived his life for. Just imagine what it means, to have to die without one's children. What wouldn't he have given to have us all around him again, just to see us again, to say a word to us! No, Mother, I think he died a very unhappy death although he isn't suffering any more now. For if we had all been there, don't you see, it would have been quite a different death, an unclouded death as it were, a right death, a death that could be assimilated, because it's ineluctable, forms part of life and is taken for granted from the beginning. Not, as now, a haphazard death, a death without rhyme or reason which brings scandal wherever it strikes and leaves nothing but an ominous void. And how can we ourselves face death calmly, now that we know nothing about it? No, no, it wasn't a beautiful death and it certainly wasn't the death he should have had after such a life. I can't say any more except quote the lines that are constantly in my mind—by, forgive me, Rilke:

O Herr, gieb jedem seinem eignen Tod.
Das Sterben, das aus jenem Leben geht,
darin er Liebe hatte, Sinn und Not.[11]

And now, how about Grandmother? What is she doing? Who is with her? Is there someone always with her? Mother, you must promise me to do everything you can to see her. Don't say it wouldn't be wise just now and there are difficulties. That would be deplorable. There are difficulties everywhere but they can be overcome. If it is in any way possible, if it isn't absolutely impossible, then you really should go. If only for a day. It's not a matter of Grandfather any more, but of Grandmother, who, as you point out, is totally alone and without protection. If I could, I myself would go this very day, do believe me. And afterwards, indeed very soon, we must have her with us. She must live with you, and if that can't be managed, she must come to me. This idea may seem preposterous to you at first glance, but why not? I've enough money to have her

[10] The pet name that Peter as a child had given his mother and that all her friends had adopted in speaking of her.

[11] *O Lord, grant to each man the death that befits him,*
The death that flows from each life,
Where he found love, significance and need.

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here. We could take a little flat in town, and she wouldn't be alone because there are the Berthoffs' parents who have no one of their own age to talk to. And I would look after her and do anything on earth for her. And I'm sure she would feel well, and above all she wouldn't be lonely. And you would come later, perhaps for a visit, perhaps for good, and when finally Grandmother ceased to live, it would happen very differently from how it has this time.

But if you had her with you, which would be preferable from many points of view, I could send you a sum of money every month to help you out a little, starting at Christmas. It wouldn't be much—you know what I earn here—and in Germany it wouldn't go far, but if, as I suppose, the standard of life in Bulgaria is approximately the same compared with Germany as it is in Portugal, then it would be a sum worth having. I could send three hundred escudos every month, which is roughly equivalent to eleven hundred leva. Is that very little?

I WANT TO TELL YOU SOMETHING, Mother, and you may find it strange, affected, sentimental and goodness knows what else. And yet I'm going to tell you regardless. . . . This death has enabled me to see very clearly a truth that I've intuited for some time, namely the profound significance of custom. You see, in the olden days the dying blessed their children. The children came and knelt down and the old man laid his hands on each head. It was a fine and solemn gesture without which one didn't die and both parties desired it. And I find that I myself have this desire, or rather I did have it, and it makes me sad to see it unfulfilled. Not the ceremony itself, that's only symbolic and no one is free enough today to dare actually bend the knee. But the hand perhaps, the great assent, and the transmission, and also the forgiveness. This being face-to-face and the linking of a life that is finished with a life that is yet to be lived, under the sign of goodness and compassion, in the full consciousness of giving and receiving. Grandfather was a simple man, you see, and his notions and principles were simple. There were many things he didn't understand, and he repudiated them because he didn't understand them. But his heart—what you call "his great heart full of love and goodness"—was rich, inexhaustibly rich. He understood everything with his heart. Few could match him in human richness and plenitude. Never, in the course of a long and often difficult life, was he found wanting in goodness or humanity; he was always ready to sacrifice himself for others, and he spent himself in doing so. That in itself makes a human being great, that in itself is worthy of remembrance. Which is why, Mother, the hand, the blessing. . . . I think that this contact would have meant a great deal to me, and perhaps to him too, as a symbol of my veneration and my love, both much greater than I've ever been able to show or express. For our powers of expression are very feeble, and it is so difficult for our inner being to reveal itself to the outside when we find ourselves face to face! There are always obstacles, due to our habits of life, obstacles men in the past weren't aware of because gestures and expressions were much more spontaneous then than they are with us now. And this is why we need symbols, gestures that bring us together and express what we personally suppress but nevertheless feel. Yes, I think a final and solemn goodbye of this kind would have been important, in the context of things that have happened and things that are to come. Our sole hope now is that Grandmother can hold out and that she may somehow contrive to join us. It's my dearest hope. And please write to me as soon as you can about anything you may have gleaned about Grandfather. On what day he died, for instance. I've only got one small photograph of him, the one taken in the garden at Wannsee, and it's now terribly blurred. And I must say this to end up with: we weren't very good children to him, neither you nor I. We should have been much more concerned with the grandparents, and even at that it would have been but a pale shadow of the love they both gave to us. But we thought we had more important things to do and in fact all we did was "to visit them now and again." And that is why—as I now realise—I never properly said goodbye to them when I left.

I APPRECIATE that you must be having problems with the children and this worries me a lot. I don't want to seem boring, but I do implore you to let me know exactly what your situation is. And I hope with all my heart that you'll make out for the best, my darling. And the same goes for Erich—if you can write to him, do give him my love. I can easily believe you when you say you would like to have him again. Perhaps that will happen. Everything is far too provisional for us to be certain even of the worst. And resignation is not the most logical conclusion to draw from our lives. Everything is possible and this is why we should go on saying to each other, hope, courage, patience.

I shall end now, and you will know from this letter what to say to Grandmother from me should you visit her.

Goodbye my darling, and kiss the kids a thousand times for me. Write soon. All my love, and I kiss you.

Always your *Peter*

If there's anything at all I can give you, just tell me. Do you need money? Goodbye, I love you.

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Lisbon, 1 December 1939

DEAREST MOTHER,

I'm writing to you from Lisbon where I've been for several days putting certain affairs in order. You must certainly know from your Bulgarian experiences that worries nowadays never end, even when one thinks one's settled everything. My worries are small but time-consuming and require endless procedures. Good, that's the end of that, it isn't very serious. I found Grandmother's letter very moving. Poor little woman, what's going to become of her? The proposal I made in my last letter—to have her here—has turned out to be impracticable, alas: the only difficulties, but they're pretty big, are those of immigration and at the moment they appear to be insurmountable. People are extremely strict and intolerant, as you yourself know from experience. All countries are the same in this respect. So what can we do? We must hope, and organise things for the future. Not too easy when we don't know what the future holds and whether Grandmother can hold out as long as that!

You're in a sorry plight again, Mother darling, so alone and abandoned. I'd like to think that Tina will come back.[12] But in no case must you relapse into the despondency of your first days in Sofia, which you have overcome. With a little goodwill you will resist it. And then you really must remember how fortunate you are compared with people who have nothing but anguish to look forward to. Think of the Jews in Lublin, think of the men at the front, think of the thousands of victims of an almost generalised violence. What do our worries matter compared with that? Can we even speak of *our* worries?

Grandmother's letter gives a blow-by-blow account of Grandfather's death and now I know that it was quick and kind. It's good to have this assurance though it doesn't in any way diminish the sorrow. But how I would love to have seen him again!

Tell me about Angeli—is she still with you? It seems incredible that such difficulties could be made about a child of eleven. With Tina it's more understandable, but with the little one. . . .

You have the great advantage over me of being able to listen to music. I miss it so much. In January Weingartner is coming here and generally speaking there are now all sorts of concerts I would love to follow. But how? I can't come in to Lisbon specially, and when I'm here there's nothing.

This is already becoming a long letter, dearest Mother, and please answer it as soon as possible. Tell me all about yourself, who you're meeting, if you have any friends, in short give me a picture of all that concerns you. Again we're somehow drifting apart from each other, and that mustn't happen. Goodbye, my darling, and remember that I have a huge longing to see you. I kiss you a thousand times and give you all my love.

Your *Peter*

In November, 1939, Salazar, following Hitler's orders, had decided to rid Portugal of all German Jews. When Peter Schwiefert wrote this last letter he had already been arrested and imprisoned for over three months. He had told his mother nothing about it so as to spare her anxiety, and it was only after his release and expulsion that he wrote to her from Rome to tell her what had happened, though even then he made as little as possible of what he had been through. He was unaware that she had been kept informed of events by a friendly couple with whom she was in correspondence and that, in fact, he had been released solely through her efforts and her money.

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(A concluding selection will be published next month)

[12] Bettina, the elder daughter, had to return to Berlin in November, 1939, because the German embassy in Sofia refused to extend the validity of her passport. She managed to get back to Bulgaria at the end of January. The mother had feared that she would also have to be separated from her younger daughter, Angelika.

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I. P. Taylor

When Beasts Most Graze

1

"left their houses weeping and became unemployed and finally . . .
died in poverty and so ended their days"
Extract from the Commission of Inquiry Returns, 1517

TENANT AT WILL, WHARRAM PERCY (*circa* 1500):

They found me at Milndam, at the fishpond,
the landmaster's men. They said:
Leave your nets, William. We're fishers of men.
Come with us to the Lord's house. Come—
and receive the Word.
I followed,
sharp as a fox out of cover. Squire Hilton
hung like a cloud on his front step.
His smile axed at my heart.
He gave me till Michaelmas—
"Tell the whole village the same."

I looked up to the furlongs, the skyline of corn.
I heard children laugh at the stream.
I turned from his gate. For Hilton
a sheep-run. For the cottar
death with the plough.

Our young men wanted to fight, but
I counselled acceptance: To sever one stoat
will summon the pack. We have no rights here—
leave behind little. Our tears
like our toil will fade into the land.

We gathered below Town Field.
Swallows twitched from the church-tower,
bellied the shallows. Next year
they'll nest in the houses. . . .
Silence will gulp their cries dumb.

2

"for where there have been a great many householders and inhabitants
there is now but a shepherd and his dog"
Bishop Latimer, 1549

SHEPHERD OF WHARRAM PERCY (*circa* 1501):

Wharram, Octon, Bartindale, Argam
gone—choked under wool. What weighs more
than a sack of wheat?
Why man—a bleat!

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I'm lucky, I know. I've moved
to this fine stone house that was William's.
The others are down. The best timber's gone
for the Hall—the rest for the sheep-fence.

Last September groped by like a blind hag.
Most cursed the shepherd—
many the priest. Hilton had need of us both.
Like rabbits we kept to our doors.

I watched them, threading away
down the valley. Bent like a windwhipped thorn,
the priest wept alone in the church.
I crept the Manor lawns, waiting Hilton's command.

3

"whither shall they go?—forth from shire to shire and to be scattered thus abroad . . . by compulsion driven some of them to beg and some to steal"

Extract from the Sheep Pamphlets

FORMER COTTAR OF WHARRAM PERCY:*

On the wolds slopes distrust.
In the towns rejection. At Grimston
the cottagers stoned us. In Malton
they barred the doors. To York,
William said: There'll be work.
Shelter. A larger place will seclude us.

But in York there were many like us,
and a threatening fear among townsmen.
Some of us left for the coast. In our camp
by the Derwent old William failed.
On a stretcher of reeds, Thomas and I
bore him back to the village.

In William's cottage the shepherd slept—
thick as a mole in a clod. We hunched
in a doorway. Cold chiselled our bones.
As first-light frosted the hills the slight breathing stopped.
We laid tumbled turves on the body—
our words too stubborn for prayer.

**skeleton discovered 1951.*

4

"But I fancy that the town has been eaten up with time, poverty, and pasturage."

Abraham de la Pryme, 1697

WHARRAM PERCY, 1975:

If you ask in the parish they'll tell you the way—
unless they're farmers. Press them,
and they'll say it was taken by plague.
Come in July, to the dig. Learn of the finds
that jog a response to the pulse of the place:
the pair of dice, the bone needle, a thimble,
a coin. . . . Or come in spring,
when the form of the land is most easily seen:

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fasten your boots. For the last half-mile
follow the tractor-ruts. Descend between swallows
cresting the folds of young corn.

The roofless church is alone in the valley—
like an old jaw loose with decay.
To the west, on the scarp-edge,
are the humps of the houses—
shallow graves in the grass.

The wind flows above them—
preserving a sadness restrained over time.

Laurence Lerner

To Sarah Burge

photographed at Dr Barnardo's Home
in 1883, aged about 8 years.

You are wondering why
The man has disappeared under a black hood.
What will he do to my face, you are asking,
Will he tear out my eyes,
Will he lock up my lips,
Will he tangle my hair?
What will he squirt at me,
Why was I chosen?
You were asking it then, you look out at us
Asking it now.

Well, I will tell you.
When your lips tighten with growing
He will plump them out.
When your eyes go hard and adult
He will keep them dewy.
When your hair turns grey
He will paint it black.
He will wipe off rouge and years,
Push your teeth back in,
Erase your wrinkles.

Sixty years from now you will bless him,
He dead and you dying.
He gave you the kiss of life.

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Letters from

Ezra Pound

to Benito Mussolini

"I personally think extremely well of Benito Mussolini. If one compares him to American presidents (the last three) or British premiers, etc., in fact one can NOT *without insulting him. If the intelligentsia don't think well of him it is because they know nothing about 'the state', and government, and have no particularly large sense of values. Anyhow,* WHAT *intelligentsia?"*

EZRA POUND, to Harriet Monroe (November 1925)

"Mussolini has steadily refused to be called anything save 'Leader' (Duce) or 'Head of the Government', the term dictator has been applied by foreign envy, as the Tories were called cattle-stealers. It does not represent the Duce's fundamental conception of his role. His authority comes, as Eirugina proclaimed authority comes, 'from right reason' and from the general fascist conviction that he is more likely to be right than anyone else is."

POUND, *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* (1935)

POUND'S FIRST attempt to enter into contact with Mussolini was in 1932. On 23 April of that year he wrote from Rapallo to Alessandro Chiavolini, Mussolini's private secretary, announcing his desire to communicate and meet with the Italian leader, to present him with "his own impressions" of Italy. On 26 April he received a reply informing him that, due to previous and pressing engagements, the Duce could not receive him; it was requested, however, that he send a letter to Mussolini outlining the topics he wished to discuss. Three days later, Pound wrote to Chiavolini again, stating that he wished to discuss "the following subjects, according to the time available":

I. Details which I have observed travelling throughout Italy during the last decade, and which demonstrate to me the obstacles overcome by Fascist effort (land reclamation, restoration of buildings, etc.).

II. Two pressing problems.

A. Working conditions in Sicilian sulphur mines, with the exception of the modernised one visited by His Excellency seven or more years ago.
B. Productivity in the cork industry, as compared proportionally with that of Portugal, Spain and France.[1]

The letter was transmitted to Mussolini and a belated interview was arranged for Monday, 30 January 1933, at 5.30 p.m., in the Palazzo Venezia in Rome. In the course of the meeting, Pound presented Mussolini with a vellum edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, published three years earlier by Nancy Cunard's Hours Press in Paris. He also handed the dictator a monograph containing a detailed 18-point programme which summed up the basic concepts of his political ideology.[2] While Mussolini paid scant attention to his visitor's political suggestions, he did seem to welcome the verse. Insisting that he found what he had seen of the poetry "*divertente*" (entertaining), "the Boss", as the poet called him in Canto 41, made an instant and lifelong believer out of Pound. Here was proof, as if proof was actually needed, of Mussolini's greatness, of his ability to lead and to discern what others (even artists) could not discern:

"MA QVESTO,
said the Boss, "e divertente."
catching the point before the aesthetes had got there. . . .

[1] Niccoló Zapponi, "Ezra Pound e il fascismo," *Storia Contemporanea*, vol. IV, No. 3 (September 1973): p. 452.

[2] Pound's 18-point programme appeared in *Il Meridiano di Roma* on 1 December 1940, under the title, "*Di un sistema economico.*" It reappeared in 1944 in the Pound collection *Orientamenti* (*Orientations*), Venice, Casa Editrice Delle Edizioni Populari, an edition which was later seized by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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Although Pound did not have the opportunity to meet Mussolini again he did keep up a steady correspondence with the Palazzo Venezia and later with the Duce at Salo during the last days of the Republic. What Pound saw in Mussolini was a statesman of power and strength, " an OPPORTUNIST who is RIGHT, that is who has certain convictions and who drives them through circumstance, or batters and forms circumstance with them", a Mediterranean Strong Man "driven by a vast and deep 'concern' or will for the welfare of Italy, not Italy as a bureaucracy, or Italy as a state machinery stuck up on top of the people, but for Italy organic, composed of the last ploughman and the last girl in the olive-yards. . . ."[3]

The poet also admired the many-sided Mussolini because he seemed to him to be a man concerned not only with power but with organisation, in this case the organisation of the state. Here was someone who desired to create an Italy with a functioning train schedule and without miles of useless swamp and marshland. Here was someone who was willing to do battle with crime, who wanted to rid the country of its rapacious usurers and munitions makers, and at the same time fight off a decadent and money-hoarding aristocracy. As an accomplished artist creates, so, the poet suggested, Mussolini dictates. His "continuing artistic and political revolution"[4] had the "material and immediate effect" of (in Pound's words) "*grano, bonifica, restauri*, grain, swamp drainage, restorations, new buildings, and, I am ready to add off my own bat, AN AWAKENED INTELLIGENCE in the nation and a new LANGUAGE in the debates in the Chamber."[5]

THE NINE LETTERS from Ezra Pound to Benito Mussolini which follow are taken from the FBI files, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. They have been translated from the Italian, except as noted, by Robert Connolly (Director of the Paterno Library, Casa Italiana, Columbia University). The bulk of the material in these files is uncatalogued, housed simply in large, plain folders, filed approximately by date. Pound's Italian, it should be noted, is often unwieldy and ungrammatical, at points all but indecipherable. The FBI files were released under the recently revised Freedom of Information Act. When and where possible, annotations of certain names and terms have been provided by the editor.

C. David Heymann

Via Marsala 12–5
Rapallo
17 April
Anno XI [1933]

HIS EXCELLENCY THE LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT

EXCELLENCY AND DUCE
Enclosed with this letter I am sending Your Excellency the small book *ABC of Economics* and the manuscript of *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* written in February.

With devoted homage,
Ezra Pound

ATTACHED TO THIS NOTE when it reached Mussolini was a memorandum from the Press Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (signature illegible) which reads in part:

> The known American writer, Ezra Pound, has sent Your Excellency the enclosed book called *ABC of Economics* with an autograph dedicated to Your Excellency and the typewritten copy of *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*, recently written by the same Pound, but not yet published. . . . His books clearly demonstrate a friendly feeling for Fascism.

A 300-word review of the *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* manuscript was likewise attached. Written by an official in the Translation Section of the Press Office, it begins:

> The author makes a comparison between the political and social conceptions and actions of Thomas Jefferson and those of Mussolini, recognising that, owing to the different periods of time in which the two carried out their activities, the Duce is not at all inferior to the great President of the United States. Both are activated by their passion for construction, but owing to his purely Italian spirit, the Duce has a still greater passion for construction; in fact, no one can appreciate his contributions unless they begin by considering him a constructionist, an artist in the greater sense of the word.

Via Marsala 12–5
Rapallo
19 February
Anno XII [1934]

EXCELLENCY AND DUCE
The *Belvedere del Architettura* by Bardi, which I received yesterday, increases even more my admiration for all that has been accomplished. BUT, with the concept of "credit to the consumer," construction can be increased a *hundredfold*.

[3] *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* (New York: Liveright, 1936), pp. 17–18.
[4] William M. Chace, *The Political Identities of Ezra Pound & T. S. Eliot* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973), pp. 63, 70.
[5] *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*, p. 73.

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To give a house of the era to each and every Italian. With the concept of "negative interest" (stamp scrip), it will not be necessary to go into DEBT each time one wants to construct.

Everything that Your Excellency has done to mobilise the internal credit of the country has turned out magnificently. I don't think that it is a good idea, however, to stir up the people, by putting into their hands so soon the potential resources of the new economy.

BUT these two discoveries by the two geniuses, Gesell and Douglas, must not be ignored.

The bankers are afraid of "ras moneta," *Schwundgeld*, and many others do not understand that two kinds of money can exist simultaneously. Naturally, if there were only "ras moneta," "legitimate" profits, etc., might disappear; but as an auxiliary currency, the experiment has already been tried out.

Naturally, since the times of the Medicis, it has been known that a low interest [rate] is better for a country than a high one, but a "Negative" interest is that much more powerful. The tax falls on the money itself—on the money that does not produce, and not on the work.

Two faint glimmers of hope exist in the United States Senate. I haven't yet received the *Congressional Record* containing Cutting's speech (27 January), but it seems that he is beginning to see the light.

The London *Times* has also been forced to consider old Kitson as a possible contributor. (I don't know if they will publish his articles). . . . Every day a new book comes out, slipping past the conspiracy of the capitalist press, and revealing a bit here and there.

I do not speak of Senator Bankhead, because I don't believe that he understands things clearly, and I suppose that he was in some way intimidated by his "friends," after he spoke, last February.

Construction creates material CREDIT, and this must not be recorded as a "monetary debt."

I hope I have been clear; it is not easy to express oneself in a language not one's own.

With all good faith,
devotedly,
Ezra Pound

PIETRA MARIA BARDI, a popular Italian journalist, and the author of the *Belvedere del Architettura*, was also the founder of the Bardi Gallery of Art in Milan. The *Belvedere* is a lengthy treatise on Italian functional architecture, which goes to great lengths to extol Mussolini's contributions in this particular area.

The 27 January speech of Senator Bronson Cutting of New Mexico appeared in that year's *Congressional Record* (73 Cong., 2 Sess., pp. 1475–76). Debating a Payment of Debts to Veterans amendment to the Gold Reserve Act of 1934, Cutting used the opportunity to present Congress with an argument which came very close to the argument put forward by Social Creditors in their bid for monetary reform. In part, he said:

> The place we want credit is in the hands of the consumer. I do not think it is necessary to argue that point at this time in the history of the United States. Three or four years ago people thought you were crazy when you talked about equating the purchasing power of the country with the productive power. Now everybody recognizes that, so far as speech is concerned. We talk about purchasing power, but we take little action about it.
>
> In my judgment the Government is going to have to finance the consumer as consumer—not primarily as a worker—and it is going to have to do it very soon. It can be done only through the establishment of some central government agency—call it a central bank or call it what you will—which will monopolise the credit system of the country for the benefit of the public and not for the benefit of the bankers. Such an agency must eventually absorb, at a greater or less rate of speed, the present Federal Reserve System. Our distributive system must be strengthened by the Government acting directly as an agent for the consumer.

And "Old Kitson" is the monetary reformer Arthur Kitson. An important source for some of Pound's ideas on money, Kitson was the author of such economic studies as *The Money Question* (London, 1903) and *The Banker's Conspiracy* (London, 1933).

Via Marsala 12–5
Rapallo
15 April
Anno XII

EXCELLENCY AND DUCE

I have received letters from America concerning the growing interest of the Administration for the ideas of Douglas. I have already written to the Chief of the Press Office that Senator Cutting has spoken most clearly (27 January in the Senate).

Cutting writes me, "I am afraid they (the Administration) don't want to ask themselves a question to which the answer is so obvious."

Ass/to Sec. writes me from the Treasury Dept. that Sec. Morgenthau has asked him to write to me "che apprezzano i miei espressioni."

(your views appreciated and ALL the problems you touched upon are having the thoughtful attention of the Administration.)

I had written with regard to the basis of Douglasite "cultural heritage as the basis of

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VALUES", etc., "lack of non-static purchasing power," etc.

(Their letter could be a lump of sugar to pacify the undersigned baby—but I am almost certain that Douglas is winning over opinions and votes.)

Meanwhile, I am enclosing a note received this morning. Perhaps it is too condensed to be clear.

VIVA SABAUDIA
Ezra Pound

THE THIRD PARAGRAPH of this letter ("Ass/to Sec."), including the parenthetical sentence which follows it, was originally written in English; it is copied verbatim.

The "note" referred to, which Pound appended to his mailing, is a three-page circular by A.L. Gibson, British Social Creditor; it is entitled *The Social Credit Proposals of Major C. H. Douglas*, and a subheading of topics discussed lists as subject matter the following: 1. Open the National Credit Office; 2. Apply the Just Price; and 3. Issue the National Dividend.

A hand-written comment by Pound appears on the third page of the circular, following the "Issue of the National Dividend" section; it reads:

> "Against misery. Not necessarily against that which Delcroix believes is saintly poverty."

Sabaudia, whose existence the correspondent so heartily celebrates, was a newly constructed urban centre, located approximately forty miles south of Rome in the southern tier of the Pontin region, on the Lake of Sabaudia. Completed early in 1934, Sabaudia comprised a total area of 144.3 square kilometers, and had a stable population of 1800. Today, it is used as a summer resort by vacationing, heat-weary Romans.

This particular letter, incidentally, was forwarded to Mussolini via the office of Count Galeazzo Ciano, to whom Pound wrote: "I respectfully request that the enclosed be transmitted to the Head of the Government." An administrator in Ciano's office, attaching a memorandum to the letter for Ciano's benefit, notes that Pound's Italian is "incomprehensible," and adds:

> "One thing that is clear is that the author is mentally unbalanced."

Via Marsala 12–5
Rapallo
25 May
Anno XII

EXCELLENCY AND DUCE
With my respects I enclose this souvenir of a neglected chapter of American economic history.

Paper currency = a note against "merchandise and lumber." In practice it was [considered] a "certificate of work done," when my grandfather was laying the foundation for a city in the wilderness, before the arrival of the bank monopolies.

It is clear that the paper money was GOOD, that is, from the worn condition of the bill. It is obvious that the system worked.

Primitive money—that is, the man who issued the money owned the merchandise. Naturally, the bankers were jealous and opposed to this primitive form, just as today they are opposed to the creative force of the state.

I don't know if McNair Wilson's book, *The Promise to Pay*, is known in Rome. It is clear but a bit long.

With all my faith,
Ezra Pound

The "souvenir" which Pound enclosed with his letter, and of which he writes, was a sample of the scrip which his grandfather, Thaddeus Coleman Pound, issued while administering the Union Lumbering Company, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin.

R. McNair Wilson, heart specialist, war correspondent, medical correspondent for the London *Times*, and an economic historian, was also an avid correspondent of Pound's. Wilson's *Mind of Napoleon* was to become an important source book for the poet, and he boosted Wilson's book, *The Promise to Pay*, wherever and whenever he could; both were published in London in 1934.

Via Marsala 12–5
Rapallo
1 June
Anno XII

EXCELLENCY AND DUCE
I do not know if the Press Office receives the *New English Weekly* regularly, but the note on page 148 regarding the Senators present at the dinner for C. H. Douglas mentions the following:

Democrats	*Republicans*
Black (Alabama)	Borah (Idaho)
Bone (Washington)	Frazier (N. Dakota)
Clark (Missouri)	La Follette (Wisconsin)
George (Georgia)	Nye (N. Dakota)

Farm/Labour

Shipstead (Minnesota)
Thomas (Utah or Oklahoma—I'm not sure which)
Wagner (New York. Lives in New York City)
Wheeler (Montana)

The supper was given by Cutting (Senator from New Mexico), Rainey, Speaker of the House, and other representatives. It is apparent that interest exists among Western agriculturalists,

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and it is clear that these economic ideas are no longer considered "poetic oddities." Here, too, we see clearly their desire to free themselves from the hold of the users.

With all my faith,
Ezra Pound

The note in the *New English Weekly* of 31 May 1934 (vol. v, no. 7) to which Pound refers reads as follows:

> . . . On April 22 Major Douglas and Father Coughlin, whose personal following exceeds that of any Hollywood queen, and whose weekly broadcasts are now based upon Social Credit, conferred together in Washington for several hours. Next day Major Douglas returned to New York by air to deliver his lecture in the New School for Social Research, after which he again went to Washington. On Wednesday he was the guest at a luncheon at the Brookings Institute, and in the evening he was guest of honour at a supper given by Senator Cutting. A list of the forty-four people present would furnish a striking testimony to the upward spread of interest in Social Credit in the United States: they included Senators Black, Bone, Borah, Clark, Frazier, George, La Follette, Norris, Nye, Shipstead, Thomas, Wagner and Wheeler; Repreresentatives Speaker Rainey, Busby, Dies, Goldsborough, Lewis, Kvale, Patman, and Steagall; Administration officials Chapman, Collier, Peek, and Hopkins, and publicists Gardner Jackson and Farmer Murphy. On the following day Major Douglas was back in New York to broadcast over station WJZ and the NBC network.

Via Marsala 12–5
Rapallo
August 2
Anno XII [1934]

EXCELLENCY AND DUCE

You have done it again, in the midst of a personal tragedy, and even the god-damn frogs have to admit it.

But the laundry girl can't get married, because there is little work. She has been "fidanzata" for 2 years. This is the very best type of working class, clean, steady; she began carrying the basket as a child, when I first came here ten years ago. And this is a concrete argument for the study of SOCIAL credit, or for the new economics, Gesell, principle of negative interest. You can't kill usury but it is possible, E POSSIBLE, to start the COUNTER-PROCESS.

I have just written a critique of J. P. Warburg's book (*Money Muddle*), astute banker's pathology. Need to him means: the need to go on banking. Anything which isn't deposited in the bank does NOT fit into his frame of reference. He was perhaps responsible for the great bank reform, healthy and prudent, proposed and carried out in America. BUT he has a psychology of the profession DEFORMED by the profession. And the sophisms, the double entendres, even the word *money* is used in a duplicate sense, that is, metal, legal paper, WITH bank-money and then on the other page, excluding bank-money, and he is so clever that he deceives even himself.

Everything that Italy DOES, she does well. Division of labour/human/good, good/and the economists (most of them don't understand the need for acting humanely) but the economic facts, the money question, and the *nature of money* remain.

With all my faith,
Ezra Pound

The first two paragraphs and the first sentence of the third paragraph of the above letter were written to Mussolini in English; the rest of the letter was written in Italian.

The critique of Warburg's book, *The Money Muddle*, was to appear as "A Banker's Elegy" in *Time and Tide* (11 August 1934).

Via Marsala 12–5
Rapallo
22 December
Anno XIV [1936]

DUCE! DUCE!

Many enemies, much honour.

I want to see all USURERS among the enemies of Italy. But, DUCE! the system of TAXES is a pernicious remnant of the past, a corpse, which must be buried along with the Bomb King and Franz Joseph. Inasmuch as the STATE furnishes a MEASURE of exchange, the state works. The State has a right to demand compensation for its work. And this compensation is fundamentally DIFFERENT from a tax.

Inasmuch as the bank-note of the STATE exists, the state works and furnishes the MEASURE and has the right to a compensation (revenue stamps, stamps for stamp scrip, invented by Avigliano, and by Gesell) of a maximum of 1% per month. The savage uses one tool, whereas the civilized man uses a hundred of them.

A means of EXCHANGE.

Another for savings.

All the expenditures of the State must be paid for in a prescribable money. All services, everything which lasts for a day and must be done over

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again the next day, must be paid for in a transient currency.

Your Excellency has already indicated as much by saying: I BECOME INFURIATED WHENEVER THEY TELL ME THAT WORK IS A BLESSING. In place of certain durable products, certificates of stock can be issued; that is, the usual state bank notes, which are now used for all merchandise and services.

In place of SAVINGS 5% state notes can be used, just as they are used today. All this would eliminate a great deal of "red tape" and all the complications and problems of cancellation of credit, etc.

VIVIA L'ITALIA
Ezra Pound
jure italico

A carbon copy of this letter was found in the FBI files; the original was located recently in the *Archivio Storico dei Ministero Affari Esteri* (Historical Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) in Rome and appeared in an article, "*Ezra Pound e il fascismo*", by Niccolò Zapponi (*Storia Contemporanea*, Bologna, September 1973).

The "Bomb King" ("King Bomba") was Ferdinand II (1810–59), Monarch of the Two Sicilies; his ruthless and ferocious repressiveness earned him his strange sobriquet.

Avigliano, although mentioned in passing by Pound in *Oro e Lavoro* (*Gold and Work*), is more difficult to trace. A possible candidate is a Francesco Avigliano, who wrote a book entitled *L'enigma sociale* (Milan: 1926, 1928, 1936), published by the Dante Society.

Via Marsala 12–5
Rapallo
15 May
Anno XV [1937]

A tax is not a share
A nation need not and
should not pay rent for
its own credit

TO THE LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT

EXCELLENCY AND DUCE

Availing myself of the invitation proffered by His Excellency Polverelli four years ago, I am sending Your Excellency a copy of the GLOBE, which has finally published my article on the EMPIRE. The article was written last September, but its publication was delayed because of preparations for a large mailing.

It is not a political magazine. I am their European correspondent, but I cannot vouch for the opinions of the other writers. I can only assure Your Excellency that I shall send news in good faith concerning Italy.

They write me from the Office: Prejudice is much against Nazi and Fascism.

Pressure is not exerted on *Globe* by commercial advertisers, and thus there is at least a certain amount of freedom. But no director of a magazine having a large circulation can ignore the opinions of his readers.

The danger of poisoning from England exists in America. The two share a common language and certain customs. . . .

THIS IS A FRAGMENT of a longer letter, the second half of which has not yet turned up.

His Excellency Gaetano Polverelli succeeded Alessandro Pavolini as Minister of Popular Culture on 5 February 1943. Prior to this, Polverelli had been head of Mussolini's Press Office (1932–33) and was Undersecretary of the Ministry of Popular Culture until his appointment as Minister. The invitation in question was a letter Polverelli had sent to Pound in response to the latter's epistle of 8 February 1933; on that occasion, Polverelli suggested to Pound that any articles deemed important enough to be seen by the Duce be sent to Mussolini directly. The article itself ("Europe—MCMXXVI: Reflections Written on the Eve of a New Era") appeared in *Globe* (May 1937), published in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

In the above letter the awkward phrase "Prejudice is much against Nazi and Fascism" was written by Pound in English just as it appears.

POUND October 28—XXI
[1943]

Service Note

REPORT TO IL DUCE

I say "Report to Il Duce" because this material has to do with various offices (Finance, Foreign Affairs), although it is herein presented as an instrument of propaganda.

A spontaneous Communist movement does not now exist in England. The few intelligent and sincere Communists in England are Communists not because they are pro-Bolshevik, but because of their anger against usury and against the usurious system.

All (I say all) the heads of the Communist Party and all of their important seconds, as far back as 1938, were known to have been salaried

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agents of Moscow and were assigned to do industrial espionage work.

But for a long time now there have been various movements for an economic and monetary reform which, from the times of H. George and the Single Tax, Distributionists, Social Creditors, followers of S. Ambrose and of Lancelot Andrewes in the Christian and Catholic tradition, opposed usury, etc.

Among these the most important is the Green Shirt Party or "Social Credit" group (Major C. H. Douglas). The meeting between Douglas and Mosley was arranged by this writer, and from the day on which the meeting took place, Mosley was taken more seriously, that is his name almost completely disappeared from the press and the silent treatment was carried on against him as it was carried on against Douglas from 1917 up until the time of his party's victory in Alberta, a province of 60,000 inhabitants, toward 1935.

In Alberta Social Credit picked up from Gesell the mechanism of free or prescribed money but applied it in an exaggerated and incompetent manner. Taxes of 2% a week, that is 104% a year, were paid instead of 12% a year as was levied by Wörgl. (And with systems which did not guarantee the adherence of the markets.)

In New Zealand, in Texas, etc., notable groups of these various reformers exist and any official mention on the part of the Fascist Republican Government which would induce these reformers to believe that serious revolution is about to take place in Italy would enhance the prestige of the Republic.

The announcement that a reform, a real monetary reform, will be put into effect for the benefit of the Italian people, would also help. We can count on a rather strong resistance on the part of the mercantile industrialists, liberals, Italian usurers, to impede the implementation of any serious reform in this field which is not imposed by the higher authorities.

LIAISON

Refer to Offices of Communications and Interior

The proposal for an autobus from Spezia to Salò via Genoa, Tortona, Piacenza and Cremona, is designed to give the Republic a new backbone.

Liguria is now completely cut off from all means of communication. Even before, one had to take three trains to get from Rapallo to Brescia. Now a person must spend the night in Genoa in order to reach Milan from Rapallo.

The Ligurians are keen mercantile industrialists and sons of smugglers. The Ligurian coast is living proof of the love of God against the smugglers. It seems that "Mazzinian" in many cases means "Mason."

But to give the impression that the new Government actually exists, an improvement of communications in addition to a direct route would help. It would be wonderful to be able to improve the conditions which have existed since September 8th.

PRESS

As a result of the appointment of the present Secretary of the Party to the post of director of *Il Messagero* the prevailing conditions of this past month should improve. The new director will help to change the typographical setup of several papers.

The Italian rotogravure maintains a format of the Sketch, Sphere Type Anglo-plutocratic. USSR EN CONSTRUZION has a format more adaptable to the republican era. It is useless for the *Corriere della Sera* to maintain traces of its infamous past. "Tempo" was always a putrid black newspaper.

Ezra Pound

THIS 1943 "Service Note" to Mussolini was one of several such communiqués which Pound sent to Il duce at Salò.

Concerning Douglas, Social Credit, and Alberta, Canada: the situation was not exactly as Pound would have it. It is true that William Aberhart and his Social Credit party were elected into office in Alberta in 1935, but Social Credit, as a monetary system, was never actually implemented with any degree of success. It is as Gorham Munson has described it in *Aladdin's Lamp* (New York, 1945, p. 207): "All Aberhart was permitted to accomplish was a kind of provincial 'new deal', some amelioration of the lot of the debtor. He was not allowed to take the smallest step in installing Social Credit, and therefore the widespread notion that Social Credit was tried and failed in Alberta is erroneous; what failed was the bungling attempt to introduce Social Credit."

It was Alessandro Pavolini who gave up his government post to become the director of *Il Messagero*, a position he later relinquished to become party secretary of the Italian Social Republic.

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Column

I MUCH ENJOYED Mr Gore Vidal's historical novel, *Burr*, which gave a peculiarly acid and caustic account of the Founding Fathers of the United States of America and achieved the not inconsiderable feat of turning Aaron Burr, that great folk-villain of American history, into a hero. I have not derived quite as much pleasure from its sequel, *1876*,[1] partly because the historical detail is less dense and luxuriant than it was in *Burr*, and partly also because Mr Vidal's narrator, Charles Schermerhorn Schuyler, is by now nearly forty years older and has become a somewhat self-conscious and pompous bore, much concerned with his physical ailments, which indeed polish him off at the end of the book. There is a danger in taking an old man as one's narrator; the old are apt to become sententious and to repeat themselves. Schermerhorn Schuyler is no exception, and Mr Vidal is not a sufficiently accomplished writer to convince us that these failings are all Schuyler's and not, partly at least, his own.

Nevertheless, Schuyler serves his purpose very well, which is to impress upon us the passage, and the ravages, of time since he was a young man, for he has spent the intervening years in voluntary exile in Europe and looks at the United States with the sharp and detached eye of an expatriate for whom everything is new and strange. The changes he notices are not only physical, in landscape and architecture and interior decoration and a marvellous multiplication of the practical conveniences of life; they are even more changes in morals and manners, and these are almost without exception for the worse.

The Founding Fathers, in *Burr*, did not indeed present a very pleasant picture. They were, according to Mr Vidal, ambitious, devious, self-seeking, vain and hypocritical; and in them the ordinary human failings were compounded by those of the politician. Yet they still had something about them of Roman simplicity and *gravitas*. They were, after all, men who, for all their faults, had founded a Republic which was the last best hope of mankind, and this gave them a stature and dignity which even Mr Vidal did not wholly deny them.

By 1876, however, a Centennial and a Presidential year, all this has changed and the Republic, hardly out of its infancy, has already entered its decadence. The fruit is rotten before it was ripe. We are in the Gilded Age, and throughout this traumatic last year of Grant's second administration, the scandals multiply until there is no one, not even the President, who has not been touched by them. The Republic is up for sale, and everyone is out for some of the loot. The novel culminates in November with the presidential election and the great steal by which the Democratic candidate was cheated out of the Presidency in favour of Rutherford B. Hayes, and the Republicans were assured of another four years in which to plunder the commonwealth.

MR VIDAL DOES ALL THIS very well, with a light and cynical touch and not too much moralising and an admirably sure sense of direction through the labyrinthine complications, political, financial, legal and constitutional, of the New York and Washington scene. Yet the picture he draws is in the end a sombre one; no one is free of the universal taint of greed, vulgarity and corruption which is destroying the body politic, and even Ulysses S. Grant has lost the virtues which once made him a hero.

Mr Vidal's historical material is quite enough to make an unusually entertaining novel; but it also suggests contemporary parallels which make us wonder, in the middle of our amusement, how seriously we ought to take it. Mr Vidal himself is well aware of the parallels though he does not over-emphasise them. He is content to tell us in his "Afterword":

> The year 1876 was probably the low point in our republic's history, and knowing something about what happened then is, I think, useful to us now as times are again becoming rather too interesting for comfort.

Where, then, does the parallel lie? It lies in the spectacle of a state which having fought and won a great war abandons everything which made the war worth while in order to enjoy the fruits of victory, and in so doing makes the war itself meaningless. The assassination of Lincoln, and the end of the Civil War, threw the whole of the United States open to the rapacity and ambition of the victors; and they seized their opportunity without thought for the ideas, and the immense sacrifices, which had made victory possible. The Republic was theirs to feed on, and they fed on it to their hearts' content.

Mr Vidal's novel is, therefore, the story of a victory turned into defeat by the blindness and greed of the victors. The mark of this transformation was the emergence of "the Almighty Dollar" as the ultimate arbiter of both private and public issues in the life of the Republic.

[1] *1876*. By GORE VIDAL. Random House, $10.00; Heinemann, £4.10.

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THIS, OR SOMETHING LIKE IT, is what *1876* has to tell us, and Mr Vidal told us very much the same thing in a recent television interview with Mr Eamonn Andrews, on the occasion of the publication of his novel in this country. The interview, one has to say, was just as entertaining as the novel. Mr Andrews was somewhat taken aback by Mr Vidal's patrician cynicism; after all, it's not the kind of thing he's quite used to on *This is Your Life* (though one rather wished he'd had the chance to dredge up a few monsters from Mr Vidal's past). He did not quite know what to make of Mr Vidal's parody of what Democratic propaganda might be like if Mr Edward Kennedy finally emerged as a contender for the Presidency. "The Hero of Chappaquiddick!—He saved that girl's life against insuperable odds!"

Was it serious? Was it a joke? Or was it simply upper-class bad taste? Eamonn Andrews avoided the difficulty by confessing, somewhat unnecessarily, that history and politics were not his strong points. But he was even more taken aback by Mr Vidal's confident assertion that, once again, scandal was about to break about the White House. Mr Andrews' ears pricked up. He was at home again. "Scandal at the White House? Come, Mr Vidal. [There was no nonsense about "Gore" and "Eamonn" in this interview.] Whatever one thinks of President Ford, one doesn't associate him with sex." This was really too easy. "Oh, sex", said Mr Vidal contemptuously; "That's all over. It went out in the '60s, with the Kennedys and that lot. Money's the thing today. They've all been on the take for years." After that, Mr Andrews more or less withdrew from the interview. Not so Mr Vidal, who went on to amuse, and perhaps shock, his audience in the most agreeable way. And yet, as in his novel, there was an undertone of seriousness to what he had to say. It was that, in the Bicentennial as in the Centennial Year, everyone had his hand in the till, and the Republic was once again up for sale.

Should one take Mr Vidal, when he consents to be serious, seriously? There are at least some reasons, I think, why one should. It must have occurred to others as well as myself that great corporations like Lockheed, which blandly confess to large-scale bribery and corruption in foreign countries, are unlikely to practise a different, or a stricter, morality in their own, should the opportunity arise; and I do not think there is any reason to believe that the opportunity does not frequently arise. This is, to me, a slightly horrifying thought. Mr Vidal, I think, would simply take it for granted.

IT IS A FAR CRY from Gore Vidal to Alexander Solzhenitsyn. After all, the two have very little in common, either in their characters or in their style of life, or in the quality of their writings, or indeed in almost anything. Whatever its commercial success, *1876* is not likely to have the same effect on the public mind and the public conscience as *The Gulag Archipelago*; in his interview with Eamonn Andrews, Gore Vidal did not expect to command the world-wide audience which either listened to or read what Solzhenitsyn had to say in his interview with Michael Charlton on BBC television. For Solzhenitsyn, as much by his personality as by his books, has by now acquired an almost unique status in the contemporary world. No writer since Leo Tolstoy has been listened to, wherever men are free to read or hear his words, with such serious and anxious attention, in the belief that they are crucial to our understanding of our own times or in the somewhat desperate hope that they may save us from the wrath to come.

And yet, despite the vast differences between them, there is something in common between what the two writers have to say, only they say it from totally opposed points of view. Mr Vidal describes the corruption of a system of which he is in many respects a typical member, and to that extent shares in the decay. Solzhenitsyn describes the reactions of an alien and a stranger, from an angle of vision so remote that it might be that of a man from Mars.

For what Solzhenitsyn had to say was that the West, by which he means primarily the United States, had lost the perception of the difference between good and evil, and for that reason had lost the moral strength to resist the permanent threat to its way of life represented by the Soviet Union. Indeed, from its standpoint of moral indifference, it was hardly capable of seeing the need to resist, or of recognising the threat as a threat, and from this he drew the conclusion that the West was in imminent danger of moral and political collapse, which for him are the same thing.

What Gore Vidal, on the other hand, was trying to do, in *1876*, was to describe how people actually behave in a political and social system in which the distinction between good and evil has been lost and pragmatic considerations of material loss or gain are all that matters; and by implication he asks us to consider whether in fact this is not the way we live now. At this point his intentions coincide with Solzhenitsyn's. The kind of people he describes are the kind of people who will behave as Solzhenitsyn expects them to when confronted by the powers of evil.

Whether Solzhenitsyn's expectations, which are very close to despair, are justified is, of course, open to doubt. It is, however, a matter of some significance that Solzhenitsyn, after two years of

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intimate contact with the West, appears to be closer to despair than he ever was when he was confined within the icy wastes of the Gulag Archipelago. And whether Vidal is right in comparing the United States in its Centennial and its Bicentennial year is equally open to doubt. All one can say is that, at the present moment, it is very hard to discover good reasons for thinking that either Vidal or Solzhenitsyn is wrong.

ONE HAS TO RECOGNISE, of course, that, like many others, Vidal and Solzhenitsyn have their eyes fixed on the United States because it still remains as true as it ever was that America represents the last, best hope of mankind. Only today one might reasonably say that it is a last and dwindling rather than a best one. In an article in *The American Scholar*, Mr Daniel Patrick Moynihan, then still American Ambassador to the United Nations, and no doubt under the influence of his experiences in that august assembly, drew attention last year to the decline in the attraction which the United States, both as an idea and as a going concern, has for the greater part of its existence exercised upon other peoples.

In that article he quoted from Lord Bryce's classic work, *The American Commonwealth*:

> "The institutions of the United States are deemed by inhabitants and admitted by strangers to be of more general interest than those of the not less famous nations of the Old World . . . for they are believed to disclose and display the type of institutions towards which, as by a law of fate, the rest of civilised mankind are forced to move, some with swifter, some with slower, but all with unresting feet."

Pat Moynihan went on to say that the ascendency which, ideologically, the United States had won over world opinion was confirmed by American entry into World War I on behalf of its allies, and in the triumphant reception accorded to President Woodrow Wilson on his arrival in Europe to negotiate the treaty which would realise the hopes of every people which wished to be free. Even more: "When it was agreed that the world itself needed a new government, the American president had the very thing, a world order modelled directly on the American federal system—constitution, court, legislative, executive and all."

"Now *that*", says Mr Moynihan, "is influence", and goes on to say that since Wilson and Versailles it has progressively declined. I should be inclined to argue with him about his time-scale, and to say that up to about ten years ago the kind of influence he is talking about was still a major, perhaps the most important, factor in world affairs. But I would agree with him, Vidal and Solzhenitsyn, that by now it has been lost, whether irretrievably or not it is too early to say; and it is very hard to see how the United States, or the West as a whole, is going to get along without it.

R

It Was Born Into An Unquiet

Whatever it was, it was born into an unquiet;
It decided to stay with a loud noise.

It nudged into a globe,
Fusing to what it was.

It became passionate,
Going round and round,

Embroiling with the stars
And embracing the rendered earth.

Stopping everything in its path
It touched the stars for talk.

T. F. Griffin

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CINEMA

Mystic Wolf-Man

By John Weightman

STEPPENWOLF, although directed by Fred Haines, financed by an American, recorded in English and made partly in England and Switzerland, is such a German film in its brooding grotesquerie that it is reminiscent in the first place of the other German products we have seen recently: *Kaspar Hauser* by Werner Herzog, and *The Fox* and *Die bitteren Tränen der Petra von Kant* by Fassbinder.

The central figures in all four films are "natural" monsters. Herman Hesse's hero—Harry Haller (a projection of the author, as the initials indicate)—who calls himself the Steppenwolf, is schizophrenic through his awareness of the tension between the spiritual and the animal in his make-up. Kaspar is a foundling, a natural child, no doubt and also a child of nature —since, through being sequestered in solitude until his late teens, he knows nothing of culture and has to make a late start on language—learning and trying to understand social conventions. He is a crude but noble savage, whose animal innocence shows up by comparison the pretences of society. Fox, a naïve, working-class homosexual, animal-like in his unsophisticated concentration and potency, is played by Fassbinder himself, and is fox-like in appearance, since Fassbinder's homely countenance, sharp-chinned and sharp-nosed, is faintly vulpine. But this fox is not wily; he is a decent beast, set upon and destroyed by the bourgeois pack. As for Petra, she is a kind of she-wolf, howling on all fours by the telephone for her absent Lesbian lover, and one wonders if Fassbinder, who appears to know English even in its ruder aspects, did not intend a play on von Kant, two syllables which might refer simultaneously to the philosopher of the moral law within and to the hungry animal void of the near-homophone.

I don't know whether the animalism of a man is a recurrent theme in German culture, but I remember that the old professor in *The Blue Angel* was made to crow like a cock to demonstrate the derisory nature of his erotic obsession. Perhaps the Germans have what might be called a Papageno-Complex, which was handled with luminous serenity by Mozart but has since gone murky as a result of Romanticism, Darwin, and Nietzsche. At any rate, all four films are predominantly sombre, although two of them, *Kaspar Hauser* and *The Fox*, also have a sort of endearing, home-spun goodness, which makes them attractive to watch. But there is something in the Germanness of *Steppenwolf* and *Die bitteren Tränen* that I find unbearably oppressive and would flee from at once, were I not restrained by a sense of duty. It is a mixture of strident pessimism and woolly generalities that makes one slightly sick in one's intellectual stomach.

THE FILM OF *Steppenwolf* has been in gestation since 1967 and is probably a labour of love, since it makes no apparent concessions to commercialism. Even so, one cannot imagine it converting the English public to an enthusiastic appreciation of Hermann Hesse. For one thing, I doubt whether it is comprehensible for the cinema-goer who hasn't read the book. All the introductory material which sets the scene has been dropped, so that certain episodes lose their point. For instance, Haller's ironic enjoyment of the spotless bourgeois comfort of the house where he lodges and which causes him to sit on the stairs in bemused contemplation is left largely unexplained; and so his presence on the stairs becomes a weird eccentricity. The reading of "The Treatise of the Steppenwolf" is accompanied by animated sequences which detract from the sense more than they illustrate it. Instead of reserving the hysterical, nightmarish scenes for the Masked Ball and the Magic Theatre at the end, the director has heightened a number of the earlier episodes in the direction of the peculiar, making Goethe into a manic dwarf and the uncomfortable dinner-party with the university professor into a mad excursion into high life. Worse still, apart from Max von Sydow who plays Haller reasonably well, all the actors ham their parts mercilessly—even Pierre Clementi, who might have had a certain physical presence as the epicene musician, Pablo. The prize for one of the worst performances in years must go to Dominique Sanda, as Hermine, who utters her comically translated speeches with a strong French accent and a dogged intensity, like an *au pair* girl who has just rushed back from the language lab at the Poly. to say her piece before she forgets where the tonic accent falls. All in all, I think the film must be written off as a leaden disaster.

THERE REMAINS the question: has a masterpiece been desecrated, or does the film, in its sombre and gaudy excess, merely exaggerate tendencies which were already present in the novel? Is Herman Hesse, as one of his American

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admirers declares, "the greatest writer of the twentieth century" who, in the post-War years, "toppled Camus from his pedestal" among the American young, or is *Steppenwolf* something less than the masterpiece it is said to be by the proponents of the Hesse cult? The second possibility seems the likely one to me, notwithstanding Thomas Mann's praise for the book. But no reader should be put off the novel by the film. *Steppenwolf*, the book, is an extraordinary compendium of contemporary attitudes, and is well worth reading as such, although it was written as long ago as 1927.

In the animated sequences, the film presents the Steppenwolf as a monster whose head is half respectable Bourgeois and half snarling Wolf. This goes some way beyond the implications of the text. The German word seems to mean "prairie wolf", *i.e.* coyote, not European wolf, and, whether or not Hesse's zoological intentions were very clear to himself, he appears to be emphasising the loneliness of the animal rather than its ferocity. Harry Haller is first and foremost an "outsider", who is both attracted to bourgeois order and culture, as Hesse was, and yet impatient with its humdrum, non-metaphysical quality. At the age of forty-eight, he is living on a private income as a solitary, melancholy, studious lodger in Basle, exactly in the way that Sartre's Roquentin, the hero of *La Nausée*, was later to live in Bouville-Le Havre, contemplating the townspeople's *mauvaise foi* with a jaundiced eye. Because of his failure to solve the riddle of life, he is proposing to commit suicide at fifty; that is, he is going through the same Absurdist/Existentialist crisis as Albert Camus's heroes, but at a later stage. He is obsessed by two main culture figures—Goethe, whom he sees as the apotheosis of the genius who opts too easily for order, respectability, and self-control, and Mozart who enjoyed a transcendental purity and certainty, impossible in the modern world. At the same time, he is a Nietzschean, in that he senses the primary animal nature of man, which is explained in "The Treatise on the Steppenwolf" handed to him by a magical stranger, although he is afraid of this animal nature and cannot come to terms with it. He frequently takes refuge in drink, like so many other alienated heroes.

The stage is now set for a change. And at this point Harry Haller can be seen to bear some resemblance to yet another modern hero, Michel in André Gide's *L'Immoraliste* (1902), a similarly studious person, chafing under bourgeois restraints, who receives his Nietzschean revelation of animal freedom from Ménalque, a Mephistophelian figure based, interestingly enough, on Oscar Wilde. Michel, thereafter, goes on to realise himself in joyous homosexuality under the Mediterranean sun. Harry Haller, perhaps in more German fashion, receives his revelation from a beautiful and enigmatic girl, Hermine, whom he meets in a tavern, called perhaps significantly The Black Eagle, and who is half-human and half-supernatural. She pledges him to obedience, as if she were a *Belle Dame sans merci*, and instructs him in pleasure, teaching him the fox-trot and introducing him to her friends, Maria and Pablo, who live for music, pleasure, and sex. In the subsequent scenes, there are many suggestion of the polymorphous perverse, since Pablo proposes group sex and homosexuality to Harry, and Hermine turns out to be the *Doppelgänger* of Hermann, a dear friend of Harry's schooldays.

THE CLIMAX COMES at a Masked Ball, where Harry, after an initial relapse into wolfish alienation, enjoys the Dionysiac ecstasy of fusion with the crowd, and then follows Hermine and Pablo down into "Hell" or "The Magic Theatre for Madmen", there to undergo a psychodelic trip which moves from horror to laughter (Pablo has already introduced him previously to drug-taking). In one phase of this dream-experience, Harry realises that what he took to be his personality is only one arrangement of the possibilities of the "subject", which can be reshuffled indefinitely. In another, he stabs Hermine to death; but this seems to be a mistaken exercise of the destructive urge, because a Court of Immortals calls him to account and accuses him of having killed the reflection of a woman with the reflection of a knife. He goes on a rampage against technology, shooting down aeroplanes and motor-cars with a machine-gun, without apparently noticing that the machine-gun itself is part of technology. (This episode in the book and the sequence in the film make one think immediately of Jean-Luc Godard's *Week-End*.) Mozart appears again to discourse rather wildly on music and to conduct a kind of ballet of heavenly spheres and fiery meteors, as if he were in a Ken Russell film. There are several reference to the Oneness Behind All Phenomena. Finally, Harry arrives at "understanding":

> I knew that all the hundred thousand pieces of life's game were in my pocket. A glimpse of its meaning had stirred my reason and I was determined to begin the game afresh. I would sample its tortures once more and shudder again at its senselessness. I would traverse not once more, but often, the hell of my inner being.
> One day I would be a better hand at the game. One day I would learn how to laugh. . . .

The message seems to be: *Tout est dans tout, et réciproquement*, and Animal/Man's final response to this cosmic totality is mirth, *le Gai Sçavoir*, of which only man among the animals is capable.

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It is clear that there is something here for practically everyone: alienated individuals nostalgic for a new order; Existentialists; Absurdists; seekers after the Transcendental; hedonists multiplying experience with omnisex and drugs; classical music lovers; jazz-freaks. The text is studded with modern clichés, for the most part beyond good and evil.

> "Strange", I said, "that shooting can be such fun! And to think I was a pacifist!". . . .
>
> I had learnt from her, once more before the end, to confine myself like a child to life's surface play, to pursue a fleeting joy, and to be both child and beast in the innocence of sex. . . .
>
> Just as madness, in the higher sense, is the beginning of all wisdom, so is schizophrenia the beginning of all art and all fantasy. . . .

But this very eclecticism seems in the end to cancel itself out in a dispiriting flaccidity. True enough, in the last resort, everything that is, just is; and, from the mystic's point of view, all manner of things are behovely. However, by the time Animal/Man has got to this stage, he might be said to be just punch-drunk with the universe.

Pastoral

Dominic Francis Xavier Brotherton-Chancery
had an egg for breakfast every morning
and revelled in obsolete forms. For example
he called an eclogue an eglog (like the Elizabethans).
He went everywhere on a bicycle. He knew very well
that ordinary people had never heard of an eclogue.
How he despised them! When his rough friend
made savage fun of Gerard Manley Hopkins,
jokingly speaking of "The Burglar's First Communion"
and hinting at the lust concealed in a work called "Hairy Ploughman",
although he giggled Dominic was shocked—
such a lack of Faith! But what he loved in his friend
was exactly the shaggy goat-footed Philistine roughness,
it made *him* seem at least twice as cultivated.
His coarse moustache was an animal temptation.
His coltish clumsiness—oh, Dominic adored!
They were both sheepheards. His mother was a nymphe.
The sheepheardesses lived in a different valley.
He literally wanted (as Gus guffawed)
no part of them! Lithe on his bicycle
he rode contented through a summer idyll.

Gavin Ewart

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NOTES & TOPICS

Brickbats for the Tate

By Edward Lucie-Smith

THE FUSS STIRRED UP by the Tate Gallery's purchase of a sculpture by the American Minimalist artist Carl André, which consists of a number of identical bricks piled one on top of another, has been the best row about modern art to have taken place in Britain for some time. Almost all of those who have taken part in it have derived some benefit, either practical or in terms of therapy. The newspapers have taken the opportunity to appear as guardians of the public good, the Trustees of the Tate and its director have been able to reaffirm their unshakable liberalism, and the gallery itself has received a great deal of not entirely unwelcome publicity.

On the fringes of the affair there have been a number of events, some a little sad and others ironic, which lead us towards the comforting conclusion that everything is still the same in the world of modern art. It was sad that some member of the public was excited by the uproar to the point of wanting to deface André's work. (A bottle of vegetable dye was thrown at it, and its components must now be soaked in water before the sculpture can once again be put on view.) It was amusing that an enterprising advertiser in the *Times* personal columns should offer the piece itself in kit form—the right number of bricks, plus written instructions for assembling them. Both of these reactions will probably confirm the supporters of modernism in their conviction of their own rightness as well as of their own righteousness. After all, isn't it the greatest works of art, such as the Rokeby Venus and Michelangelo's Pietà, which tend to attract the attention of vandals? And isn't it the traditional cry of the philistine, to say: "You could do it yourself . . . "?

I find these confirmatory phenomena depressing, and the debate about André's work and the Tate's action in purchasing it seems to me an opportunity missed. It was the opportunity to discuss the precise relationship of the *avant-garde*, and even of modernism itself, to contemporary social conditions. It was also an opportunity to discuss the role of the museum in a society such as our own.

"MIDWAY THROUGH THE 1970s", wrote the American critic Hilton Kramer in *Commentary* (May 1975),

> "it looks more and more as if the present decade is destined to become the graveyard of all those illusions and chimeras spawned in the radical culture of the 1960s. The signs of recoil and retrenchment, hesitant and uncertain only two or three years ago, now gather momentum with dizzying speed: the noise of recantation fairly fills the air. . . . "

It may fill the air in America, but here in England those sounds of repentance are not so apparent.

Kramer's article was printed as a rejoinder to another article, a long piece entitled "The Painted Word" by the famous American "new journalist" Tom Wolfe. This was published in *Harper's* and has recently appeared over here in the February 1976 issue of *Harpers/Queen*. The inbred nature of the art-world is such that Wolfe's piece was in turn triggered off by an observation of Kramer's, which Wolfe discovered in the *New York Times*:

> "given the nature of our intellectual commerce with works of art, to lack a persuasive theory is to lack something crucial—the means by which our understanding of individual works is joined to our understanding of the values they signify."

Wolfe's attack on the *avant-garde* falls into two parts. On the one hand, he castigates the dishonesty of its theoretical positions; and on the other he analyses its social role. Hilton Kramer finds that part of his analysis which has to do with modern art itself inadequate, but is forced to admit the shrewdness of his social observation:

> "he has a particularly wicked eye for those moments when the ante is abruptly raised in the *avant-garde* sweepstakes by hungry newcomers to the scene, thereby calling the bluff of the 'advanced' theories of the reigning mandarins and instantly revealing them to be establishmentarians with vested territories to protect."

Why is it that this comment and indeed the passages in Tom Wolfe's article that provoked it alike seem curiously remote from the *avant-garde* art-world as we know it in England? The answer is, of course, that, just as the American *avant-garde* reflects America itself in microcosm, so too does the British *avant-garde* reflect the nature of British society. The bustling, competitive nature of the American *avant-garde* remains capitalist to the core, while here we have the more rigid hierarchies of a typical welfare democracy.

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It is true that Hilton Kramer himself sees the nature of *avant-garde* art as something which is being profoundly altered by changes in the social structure: "A society more and more dependent upon government subsidies for its own cultural prosperity will naturally have some second thoughts about the role of patronage and approved taste in the era that allegedly saw the artist and the bourgeoisie locked in mortal combat. . . ." But the process is only in its infancy in the USA compared to what has happened on the other side of the Atlantic. Here, the more self-consciously *avant-garde* the creative manifestation, the more certain it is that there will be a proportionately high contribution from public funds.

I say "proportionately" because, in fact, the total sum paid from the official arts budget to the *avant-garde* is small. It is almost nothing, in comparison to the sums given to museums as a whole, or to the great "official" cultural enterprises, such as the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, the National Theatre, and the Royal Shakespeare Company. Even the Tate, which is our flagship gallery of modern art, spends only a tiny part of the funds available to it on work which could be classified as *avant-garde*. The rest goes on buying work for the British collection (also a gallery responsibility), and in trying to fill gaps in the representation of classic modernism (at a time when top-class Cubist works, for example, are amongst the most expensive things in the whole of the art-market).

THE REASON FOR PAYING special attention to its *avant-garde* purchases is that they are symptomatic. It is by examining them that we can read the official mind—and in this field, it is now the official mind which counts. Gazing at Carl André's bricks rather as the medium gazes at her crystal ball, what can we deduce from their presence in the Tate? First of all, this is an American work—further confirmation, if any is needed, of the dominance still exercised by American art over the minds of British artists and art theoreticians. Secondly, it is "typical." It would be hard to find anything more thoroughly representative of the phenomenon known as "Minimal Art." Thirdly, in *avant-garde* terms, it is almost middle-aged, since it dates from the mid-1960s. The Tate's decision to purchase this particular André was not made when this was a new and controversial manifestation, but only when this kind of art had had enough time to create its own context. Fourthly, and this is the most important thing about it, it is a highly intellectual, not to say élitist, work. It is not merely that its proper context is the museum, but that it does not in any way require the museum to change its own nature in order to accommodate it. This is not something which can be said of a number of other manifestations which are now classified as *avant-garde*.

Indeed, one of the things which Carl André's work, and the Tate's decision to purchase it, reminds us of is the fact that there is now not one *avant-garde* but several. The divisions run deeper than the divisions between rival art-styles —Pop and Op, for instance—which characterised the 1960s. Part of the Tate's defence for buying this sculpture in particular is that it is "representative." The description is a challenge. What about all the categories which are not represented in the Tate? Pop Art makes its bid with Roy Lichtenstein's enormous *Whaaam!* and there are a few other Pop items; but we shall look in vain for any example of Pop's American successor, "Super Realism." Similarly, there is nothing to introduce us to the work of the Viennese "Direct Action Group", which includes men such as Herman Nitsch, Gunter Brüs, and Rudolf Schwarzkogler. I do not choose these two groups of artists entirely at random. Both were to be seen exhibited in some depth at the last Kassel *Documenta*, which is already four years distant from us. The *Documenta* undoubtedly provides a kind of consecration for the aspiring *avant-garde* artist; and no director of a museum of modern art, or his staff, can be entirely ignorant of what is included in it.

Of course, I am well aware of the arguments which could be put forward against purchasing either a "Super Realist" painting or a representative photographic documentation of what has been done in Vienna. "Super Realist" art is vastly expensive—a really good work by Richard Estes, the most popular exponent of the style, might cost the Tate in the region of £20–25,000. In addition to this, the whole movement has been dismissed as cheap and commercial by a number of respected critics. It was the public which made the reputation of the style, not the theoreticians. The Tate might feel it was letting academicism in by the back door. The "Direct Actionists" would meet with another objection altogether. Not so much that they can only be represented in photographs (the Tate has purchased a photographic documentation from Gilbert & George, and Gunter Brüs is in any case a prolific draughtsman), but that the public would never tolerate such a heady mixture of obscenity and violence.

IN A CHAPTER of his new book, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, Daniel Bell gives an incisive analysis of the function of

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the modernist *avant-garde*. He quotes Irving Howe's dictum that "Modernism must always struggle but never quite triumph, and then, after a time, must struggle in order not to triumph." But he goes further than this. He compares modernism to the social science of the late 19th century, which assumed that "the surface rationality of appearances belied the irrationality of the substructures of reality." Professor Bell concludes:

> "Modernism, too, insists on the meaninglessness of appearance and seeks to uncover the substructure of the imagination. This expresses itself in two ways. One, stylistically, is an attempt to eclipse 'distance'—psychic distance, social distance, and aesthetic distance—and to insist on the absolute presentness, the simultaneity and immediacy, of experience. The other, thematically, is the insistence on the absolute imperiousness of the self, of man as the 'self-infinitizing' creature who is impelled to search for the beyond."[1]

It might be argued that the sculpture by André which the Tate has bought neatly encapsulates both of these essential characteristics. The whole theory of Minimal Art insists upon the absolute "presentness" of the work, which is "an independent object as real as a chair or a table" (Tom Wolfe). And this particular piece certainly seems to aspire towards some kind of "beyond"—perhaps a "beyond" beyond which, in turn, there is nothing, not even a pile of bricks. The interesting thing is that André manages to deal with the demand that the artist be "absolutely modern" in terms which are strictly aesthetic.

There is no doubt in my mind that this is what makes André's work amenable from the Tate's point of view. He does not ask the institution to change its categories. He knowingly or unknowingly shapes what he does so that it fits the pigeon-hole already prepared for it. And it is not only the physical and organisational structures of the place which remain undisturbed, but the corresponding intellectual and moral structures of those who direct it. Here is one kind of avant-gardism, at any rate, which does not impose upon them the painful necessity of rethinking their own attitudes towards the Modern or their own notions about the role of a Museum of Contemporary Art.

What Carl André's bricks impose upon the public, when we come down to it, is a paradox: "psychic distance" disguised as the absence of it. The vaunted presentness is, to the majority of spectators, something totally alien. What alternatives are open to the man who finds himself in this situation? He can react, as the popular newspapers encourage him to do, with simple indignation at this waste of public money, at this new attempt to pull the wool over the eyes of the innocent. Or he can look for instruction to those who seem to know better than he—to the professionals (critics or curators) whose focus of activity is the Museum. The second reaction is, obviously, wholly advantageous from the point of view of a ruling art-bureaucracy. It gives them something purposeful to do. The labour of making converts to "Modernism" continues, since, thank God, there are still great hordes of the unconverted. And even the first, negative, response is not wholly displeasing. The representatives of the institution are able to preen themselves on the fact that *their* kind of Modernism still needs to be defended, and therefore remains modern.

THIS ENABLES THE ART HIERARCHY to ignore the really crucial question, which is whether work of this sort, or even a controversy of this sort, has any relevance, either to the way in which art is developing, or the way in which society is developing.

On the day on which I began to write this essay, I received a press release from Canada House Gallery, the official showcase of the Canadian High Commission in London. It announced an exhibition by two artists

> "who have recently turned from minimalist sculpture to dialectical art. Provocative slogans are blazoned across the works indicating their chosen starting points for debates into questions concerning the proper role of the artist and art in society."

The slick manipulative politicisation implied by this does as much disservice to contemporary culture as self-righteous retreat into some form of beleaguered ivory tower.

The developments which have taken place in the art-world during the past few years indicate, not society's disillusionment with modernism, as Hilton Kramer suggests, but modernism's own self-doubts. Like 19th-century social science (and one can take Professor Bell's comparison a little further than he does), avant-gardism implies a belief in the meliorative effect of progress. New art must be better—because it is newer, more advanced. Not so. Nor will the Museum necessarily be more efficient as a place of instruction if it strains after the most modern. There are only certain kinds of modernism which it can now assimilate without destroying itself. Yet if it ignores the rest, it may fall into a state of hypocrisy which could be just as destructive.

[1] *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*. By DANIEL BELL. Heinemann, £5.75; Basic Books, $12.95. Professor Bell's essay on "The Eclipse of Distance" appeared in ENCOUNTER (May 1963).

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Can (and Should) *Détente* be Saved?

The Threatened Balance—By RICHARD LOWENTHAL

HAS *détente*, widely hailed a few years ago as the road to "a stable structure of peace", in fact only undermined the Western position in a continuing East-West conflict?

A growing number of voices on both sides of the Atlantic are asking the question, and it is easy to see why. The indications of Western weakness and of increasingly aggressive Soviet confidence have accumulated in recent months. On our side, there is not only the economic damage to social and political cohesion caused by inflation and recession, but the striking isolation of the Western powers in the United Nations; the visible weakening of NATO's Mediterranean flank; and, above all, the growing symptoms of an at least temporary paralysis of the United States in the international field. On the Soviet side, there is the substantial growth of the conventional armaments of the Warsaw Pact while the talks on Mutual Force Reduction stagnate; the open intervention with Soviet arms and regular Cuban forces on the Atlantic coast of Africa; the confident talk of a preponderance in the "world correlation of forces", of a new phase of the "general crisis of capitalism", of an "indivisible world revolutionary process" reaching at last the advanced industrial nations of the West.

Amidst the sense of discomfiture spreading particularly in the USA, a growing number of politicians, military men and commentators are asking that the West should "call off" *détente* because it has proved "unilateral", while others continue to blame their own country for all the evils of this world, blithely ignoring the evidence of advancing Soviet power. Against both, I shall argue here (*1*) that *détente* was, and is, indeed useful to both sides as a means to limit the forms and range of the East-West conflict; (*2*) that, so far from offering a prospect for ending the conflict it was necessarily founded on a *balance of forces* between East and West; and (*3*) that this balance has been seriously eroded lately by factors quite independent from *détente*.

In other words, *it is not détente that has undermined the balance of power on which it was based, but independent threats to that balance that have lately undermined détente. It follows that efforts to restore the balance are needed not to replace but to save détente.*

What Détente Is & Is Not

IN THE HISTORY of the East-West conflict that has divided the world after the end of the Second World War, there have been three great constants and one major variable. The first constant has been the rivalry of the two superpowers, gradually modified by the rise of other forces but never replaced by them, as the main axis of world affairs. The second constant has been the contrast of systems between these two powers—not only of economic or social, but more vitally of political systems and ideologies—that has always prevented a stable compromise on the division of the world between them. This is, essentially, due to the fact that the ideological legitimation of the Soviet Union's ruling party rests on the doctrine of inevitable conflict with the "capitalist world." The third constant has been the need for "peaceful coexistence", in the sense of avoiding self-destructive nuclear war, and this was tacitly recognised even by Stalin as a limitation of the forms of the conflict.

The major variable is the willingness or ability of the protagonists further to limit the forms and the range of the conflict by genuine negotiations leading to partial agreements. In some phases that willingness or ability was lacking—and many attempts at negotiation remained in fact confined to an exchange of hostile propaganda. In other phases *specific* issues were indeed settled by negotiation, thus reducing the area as well as the burdens and risks of the continuing conflict. Those were the historic phases of so-called *détente*.

Thus, there had been *no* fruitful negotiations during the formative phase of the Cold War, right through the Berlin Blockade, the creation of NATO, the Korean war, and the decision to rearm

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West Germany. (The agreements that ended the Blockade of 1948–49 and first stopped the fighting in Korea by a truce (1951) were too limited to make a difference to the overall political climate.) But Stalin's death opened a first brief period of *détente*, resulting in the Austrian state treaty of 1955, the Soviet-Yugoslav reconciliation, the Korean armistice and the settlement of the first Indo-China war, as well as in the Geneva summit meeting of 1955. Though this first post-War meeting of heads of government reached no agreement on the points on the agenda, it brought a first informal Soviet-American understanding on the common interest in avoiding nuclear war. The background to this first *détente* was the recognition by both sides of the "balance of terror" after the development of the thermo-nuclear bomb.

THIS FIRST EAST-WEST *détente* was shaken by the double crisis of the Hungarian Revolution and the Suez war in the autumn of 1956; and it ended when Khrushchev came to believe that the development of the intercontinental missile heralded a major shift in the balance of power in his favour. The new acute phase of the Cold War, centred around Khrushchev's Berlin Ultimatum of November 1958. It lasted to the end of 1962, despite interruptions by repeated attempts at negotiation (like Khrushchev's visit to the USA in 1959, and the abortive summit in May 1960), and it culminated in the Cuban "missile crisis" of 1962. Its outcome, combined with the opening rift between the Soviet Union and China, convinced Khrushchev that his judgment of the shift in the balance had been mistaken. This created a new chance for *détente*, and the Moscow Test Ban agreement of the summer of 1963 was its first fruit.

Yet between 1963 and 1969, no further substantial progress developed from these beginnings. This was due largely to the fast recovery of Soviet power made possible by the American involvement in Viet Nam; by the sharp policy divergence between France and the United States; and by the temporary paralysis of China during the Cultural Revolution. This period saw, on one side, a number of unrequited *détente* feelers by a disunited West (American efforts to get Soviet diplomatic support for extrication from Viet Nam, Gaullist moves for a rapprochement with the Soviet bloc at the price of a loosening of NATO ties, and the first unsuccessful West German attempts at a new *Ostpolitik*); on the other, substantial Soviet efforts to catch up with American missile and naval power and the crushing of the "Prague spring." The only substantial agreement reached in those years was the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The Achievements of Détente, 1969-73

YET BY 1969, a unique combination of factors converged to make possible a real *détente* in our sense of a real, if partial, reduction of the scope of the East-West conflict. On the Soviet side, a sense of achievement at reaching approximate quantitative equality with the USA in strategic nuclear weapons (and also at having once again assured its control of Eastern Europe) coincided with growing worry both about the continued lagging of Soviet civilian technology and living standards behind the West and about the renewed acuteness of tensions on the Chinese frontier. For China's emergence from the "Cultural Revolution" had been marked by her return to an active search for friends in all four corners of the world, excepting only the Soviet Union. On the Western side, the arrival of a new US Republican administration, determined both to end the military involvement in Viet Nam and to improve relations with China, coincided with the political demise of General de Gaulle. The consequent reduction of tensions within NATO permitted an effort to stop further deterioration of the East-West balance.

At the same time, the *Ostpolitik* of the new Brandt-Scheel government in West Germany opened for the first time the prospect that the German Federal Republic would accept a *modus vivendi* with the Soviet bloc. It would be based on recognition of the territorial *status quo* in Eastern Europe—in return for Soviet recognition of the *status quo* in West Berlin. Previously, the legitimation of the East European *status quo* (the Soviets' "defensive" goal in Europe) had seemed impossible to achieve without the breakup of NATO ties between West Germany and her allies (its "aggressive" goal). Now the two aims became separable, and a mode of consolidation in Europe became negotiable.

THE NEW AMERICAN ATTITUDE to Viet Nam and China, by freeing American policy from an excessive and divisive commitment in a non-vital region, helped to restore the basis for a new balance. The new German attitude to the European *status quo* permitted not only the West German treaties with Moscow, Warsaw, and East Berlin, but also the four-power agreement on Berlin that was Bonn's precondition for the coming into force of the new arrangements. The new balance—characterised by approximate equality in missile strength on one side, by Soviet economic strains and renewed preoccupation with China on the other, made possible the first serious and promising negotiations on arms limitation since the beginning of the Cold War—

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SALT—as well as Soviet-American summit talks on crisis management and economic cooperation.

Altogether, two of the main danger areas of the world were defused in the course of some 3–4 years. In Viet Nam, this was made possible by the belated recognition that continental South-east Asia was not an area of vital interest to the USA, and the consequent acceptance of political defeat. That acceptance, in fact, preceded *détente* and was one of its starting points; but *détente* facilitated the orderly withdrawal of American troops. In Central Europe, what was achieved was a political consolidation of the rights of both East and West under a long-existing military *status quo*, ending the special causes of tension that had led to recurrent crises in that area. By contrast, *détente* had *no* major impact on the remaining main danger area, the Middle East. There no stable and recognised *status quo* existed, and there both superpowers considered their vital interests to be crucially involved.

The bilateral Soviet-American negotiations—apart from SALT (an important beginning that still appears hopeful of further progress) have produced both substantive improvements in the mechanism of "crisis management" as well as a certain amount of illusionary rhetoric that has proved incompatible with the continuing power rivalry. This applies above all to Richard Nixon's phrase that "a stable structure of peace" was being built, and to his statement (in the same 1973 message to Congress) that neither of the superpowers was any longer able to "turn marginal increments of power to political advantage." It also applies to the clause in the Nixon-Brezhnev agreement (in the same year) which obliged both powers to consult if dangers of war arose. The Yom Kippur War of Autumn 1973 has in fact shown both that the Russians did not, and indeed could not, practise advance consultations at the expense of their Arab allies though they must have had foreknowledge of the attack; and that neither side renounced the opportunity for winning "marginal" political advantage (the Soviets in backing the attacks on Israel, the Americans in turning Egypt away from Soviet influence). However, the final phase of the same war also showed that in certain situations "joint crisis management" was both indispensable and effective.

DÉTENTE HAS ALSO BORN FRUIT in steps towards "economic cooperation" that have been secondary but substantial: substantial in the expansion of East-West trade and in specific long-term compensation agreements (particularly for fuel), but secondary in the sense that they would not have justified either side in making *major* political concessions for their sake alone. (In particular, experience has shown that there is no prospect whatsoever of using the supposed Soviet dependence on Western credits and deliveries as a lever for achieving changes in Soviet domestic policy by formal negotiation or legislation—as was only to be expected from our knowledge of the governing principles of the Soviet régime.)

Finally, the efforts at multilateral European negotiation have only got going at a time when, for reasons I will go into below, the heyday of *détente* appeared to be past. The Helsinki Conference, desired by the Russians in order to obtain a multilateral formalisation of the European *status quo*, has been accepted by the West Europeans—and with less eagerness by the Americans—as a means both to create formal obstacles to repetitions of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia and to obtain new Soviet obligations concerning the "free exchange of information, ideas and persons." After prolonged haggling, both sides have achieved paper assurances hedged with reservations by their partners with which they profess to be satisfied and which each continues to interpret in his own way. While I consider it unjustified to charge that the Helsinki charter has "cemented" the subjection of Eastern Europe to Soviet control, and I even feel that it has made repetitions of the "Brezhnev doctrine" of 1968 somewhat more difficult, I cannot regard the gains in the "struggle of ideas" as more than *marginal*—because that struggle cannot, by its very nature, be settled by any diplomatic document. In contrast, the Vienna talks on "Mutual Force Reduction" (which were started on Western initiative) could have substantial importance in the event of success. But they have hardly got off the ground so far, so that judgment must depend on future events; and they have been burdened in advance by very serious increases in the conventional forces of the Warsaw Pact.

The New Factors of Western Weakness

MEANWHILE, HOWEVER, a number of new factors have begun to affect the balance of world forces, since about 1971, and to shift it more unilaterally in favour of the Soviets since the later part of 1973. I am not thinking primarily of the changes in East and South Asia. There, the pro-Western effects of the American-Chinese and Sino-Japanese rapprochement have only partly been matched by the Soviet-Indian Treaty of Friendship and the creation of Bangla Desh. The Communist victory in Indo-China has had only limited repercussions in the wider region. Nor am I thinking of the direct effects of the Yom Kippur War in the Middle East, in which the limited

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success of Russia's Arab clients was at least balanced by the defection of Egypt from the Soviet camp. In fact, the major new factors that have weakened the Western position have *not* been of Soviet making—but they have naturally lent themselves to Soviet exploitation.

(*1*) The first of these factors has been the economic crisis in the industrially advanced democracies. It was first heralded when increasingly uncontrolled inflation led, in 1971, to the severance of the dollar's link with gold and thus to the collapse of the international currency system created at Bretton Woods; and it was made acute in 1973 by the temporary Arab oil boycott and the subsequent dramatic increase in oil prices. The consequent instabilities in world trade with their potential of conflicts among the advanced democracies, and the interruption of a long period of steady economic growth by a Western recession with up to 15 million unemployed, have demonstrated the vulnerability of their economies, strained their capacity for cooperation, and even put the political stability of some of them into question. In the hope of strengthening these effects of the "general crisis of capitalism", the Soviets have encouraged the demands of the oil-producing countries and of other raw-material producers.

(*2*) The second new factor, closely linked with the first, is the spread of an increasingly militant anti-Western attitude among the majority of Third World countries, due in part to long-lasting neglect of their interests by the countries and firms dominating world trade. For a number of years the inflationary rise in the price levels of Western industrial products (both in absolute terms and even more in relation to raw-material prices) had united the underdeveloped countries —the potentially rich raw-material producers as well as the true Have-Nots—in a common sense of grievance against the "Western imperialists" as long evidenced in the conferences both of UNCTAD and of the "non-aligned" group of nations. Since the currency crisis and particularly the oil crisis, this grievance has permitted the oil producers (and particularly some Arab states) to create something approaching a common anti-Western political front of the underdeveloped world under their leadership, as demonstrated in the recent debates and votes of the United Nations Assembly. The resulting loss of influence in the uncommitted countries has impaired the freedom of action of the Western Alliance and correspondingly increased that of the Soviet Bloc.

(*3*) A third new factor is the weakening of cohesion on NATO's Mediterranean flank by a series of events of different origins, *e.g.* the Greek-Turkish conflict over Cyprus, the Portuguese overturn, and the political instability in Italy. The effect of the Cyprus conflict on the usefulness of American bases in that region has been worsened by the policy conflicts between the American administration and the Congressional majority on that issue. The Portuguese revolution during its early, Communist-dominated stage cast doubt on the use of the Azores as a staging point for the US Air Force. The more-or-less permanent government crisis in Italy has led to a situation in which no majority for an effective policy can be formed any longer without at least the toleration of the Communist Party. The total effect has been to cast serious doubt on the defensive readiness of NATO in this important area.

(*4*) Finally, a fourth major factor of Western weakness is the prolonged crisis of the American system of government—an aftermath of the combined divisive effects of the Viet Nam war and the Watergate scandals. The resulting "crisis of authority", reinforced by the interim administration of a President without direct popular mandate, has led to a deep congressional distrust of every foreign policy move on the part of the administration. It has also produced a loss of *esprit de corps* among the foreign service and intelligence personnel that is constantly exploited for ever-new disclosures by American mass media now quite addicted to that occupation. It is characteristic that Secretary of State Kissinger, who in the heyday of *détente* was generally praised for his achievement of rapprochement with China and balance with Russia, has lately become the simultaneous butt both of the Right-wing opponents of *détente* and of the Left-wing opponents of American national power in any shape or form. Divided counsel between the arms of government and frequent unwillingness to accept constructive compromises reinforced by the inability to preserve any secrets in the interests of national security has led to a temporary near-paralysis of the foreign policy of this great power. Inevitably this constitutes a serious threat to the world balance as long as it lasts.

COMPARED WITH THESE major developments that have weakened the Western position without any causal relation with *détente*, the possible negative effects of *détente* itself have been strictly limited. Once it is agreed that the acceptance of defeat in Viet Nam was inevitable and served as one of the starting points of *détente* rather than its result, there remains only one real charge—that the illusions that accompanied *détente* have undermined the readiness of Western democratic electorates to support the

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sacrifices needed for self-defence, and have led to dangerous budget cuts. There is indeed evidence of such a tendency both in Britain and in some of the smaller West European countries. But against that the fact should be emphasised that the disquieting increases in the conventional forces of the Warsaw Pact have lately been answered by increases in the force levels of both the United States and West Germany. These are, after all, the two Western countries that were most actively concerned with *détente* agreements, and they have not been discouraged from continuing to assure their military security.

A New "Forward" Soviet Policy?

THE GROWING WEAKNESSES of the West inevitably present as many temptations for the Soviets to venture on a more "forward" policy, even at some risk of jeopardising *détente*. We may assume that, in recent months, an internal debate on the advantages and disadvantages of *détente* has been going on in the Moscow leadership that is broadly comparable to the public argument conducted in the West. On the negative side, from a Soviet point of view, there is the disappointment about the limited development of economic relations with the USA (except for the wheat deal). There is annoyance about the constant pressure exerted by Western opinion on "human rights" issues (*e.g.*, the treatment of dissidents, freedom of emigration, and the admission of Western newspapers and literature) frequently with reference to the Helsinki document. There is, no doubt, also increasing worry about the spread of a spirit of national independence and ideological "revisionism" among the leading Western Communist parties, for this also has been favoured by the climate of *détente*.

But the main thrust of Soviet hard-line criticism appears not to be that *détente*—both the slogan and the practice of serious negotiation—should be abandoned, but that under its cover the present weaknesses of the West should be exploited more ruthlessly. In some fields, indeed, that is already being done. The Soviets have, for years, held back in the negotiations on Mutual Force Reductions in Europe, and have in the meantime strengthened the forces of the Warsaw Pact. They have reacted to their setback in Egypt not only by concentrating on the strengthening of Syria, but by committing themselves to the full political support of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. They supported the PLO's "recognition" by the new anti-Western majority of the United Nations, thus erecting a deliberate roadblock against further progress in step-by-step negotiations in the Middle East. Perhaps most seriously, they have opened a new zone of regional conflict in West Africa by their intervention in Angola, and have—*for the very first time since the Korean war!*—approved the dispatch of regular fighting units of an ally for intervention in another country's civil war.

MEANWHILE, IN THE EXPLOITATION of real or supposed revolutionary opportunities in Western Europe, their practice has been lagging behind their theory. Leading Soviet ideological spokesmen like Suslov and Ponomarev have been proclaiming a new stage in the "general crisis of capitalism" and the "world revolutionary process" since 1974; and their responsible collaborators have lately addressed militant advice to the West European Communists, advocating the formation of "workers' governments" as a "transitional slogan" towards creation of a "revolutionary democratic state", and warning them that the "peaceful road" was a merely "tactical slogan" and that "revolutionary violence" would prove indispensable for crushing the "counter-revolutionary opposition".[1] But the leading West European Communist parties—notably in Italy, Spain, and France—have refused to accept these lessons or to subscribe to any international document on a common strategy for achieving power. Only the Portuguese Communists have tried to act on Moscow advice, and have failed miserably; and their efforts were backed by the Soviets with propaganda and money—but not by direct intervention. So, on the eve of the XXV Congress of the CPSU, efforts to produce a common international document for the strategy of revolution in Western Europe were abandoned; Brezhnev's report to the Congress reflected some uneasiness about the decline in "proletarian internationalism" in some Western parties, but no serious hope for revolutionary developments in the West.

Behind Brezhnev's caution on this subject, the continued interest of the bulk of the Soviet leadership in such central features of *détente* as "crisis management" and "economic cooperation", but also in strategic arms limitation, could be perceived. This was confirmed by the latest Soviet proposals for solving the dilemmas of SALT II by agreeing to a lower total level of

[1] See in particular the articles by Alexander Sobolev on "The Dialectics of the General and the Particular in the Development of the World Revolutionary Process", *Voprosy Istorii KPSS* No. 11, 1975, and by Vadim Zagladin on "Preconditions for Socialism and for the Struggle for Socialism" in *Voprosy Filosofii*, Nos. 10 and 11, 1975. Sobolev is a former editor of the official international Communist review *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, published in Prague. Zagladin is deputy-head of the department of the Central Committee Secretariat dealing with Soviet relations for non-ruling Communist parties.

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strategic weapons. Altogether, the report (like Soviet practice) reflects *both* continued Soviet concern to preserve this core of *détente—and* the belief that, with the present relation of forces, it could be preserved even while the Soviets take offensive action by proxy at the weak points of the Western periphery and particularly in the Third World.

How can the West Respond?

FROM WHAT HAS BEEN SAID, it should be clear that *détente* as we understand it is not at an end, but it is seriously in danger. The possibilities of successful negotiations on strategic arms limitations and of maintaining the machinery of crisis management still exist and continue to be in our interest. So do the possibilities of maintaining, and marginally improving, human contacts across the European border between the blocs (assured less by the Helsinki document than by the Eastern need for economic relations). The chances of conventional arms limitations in Europe are more doubtful, but they are still worth pursuing. Yet the more militant attitude of the Soviets in other fields that has been encouraged by the evident weaknesses of the West has seriously increased East-West tensions and may drive them to the point where *détente* becomes untenable.

Whether this dangerous development can be reversed in time depends *not* on our threatening the Soviets with "calling off" *détente*, which is, after all, in *our* interest as much as in theirs. It depends on remedying the Western weaknesses that have undermined the East-West balance and have put *détente* in jeopardy. This means it depends on policies that are within the power of the West, because they refer primarily to *intra*-Western affairs or to Western relations with the Third World. Thus the overcoming of the debilitating effects of inflation and recession depends on a better coordination of Western economic policies (the Rambouillet meeting of heads of government and the Jamaica conference of the International Monetary Fund have offered some hopeful signs). The reduction of the anti-Western "Bloc mentality" in the Third World depends *not* on mere exercises in verbal confrontation, inevitable as these may sometimes be, but on concrete negotiations to improve the situation of the raw-material producers and the have-not countries. Here, too, there has been a hopeful beginning, but the resistance of vested interests on our side against stabilisation measures has by no means been finally overcome. The acute Communist danger in Portugal has passed, and the fate of the other Mediterranean danger-points also depends in the main on constructive diplomacy (as in Greece and Turkey) and on constructive economic policies (as in Italy).

A last consideration. The near-paralysis of the US government—at present, the most serious factor of Western weakness and, in that sense, the biggest single threat to *détente*—is only likely to be cured if the outcome of the Presidential elections and the increasing public awareness of the dangers of the present situation lead to a more cooperative relationship between President and Congress and, generally, to a revival of a sense of the fundamental common interests of the American nation.

If the balance of power can be restored at the danger points as a result of such constructive Western efforts, the temptations for Soviet exploitation of Western weakness will be removed and *détente* can be saved. Otherwise, the loss of balance may well lead sooner or later to the end of *détente*, and even to the loss of its achievements.

Letter from Paris

By Jan Morris

"NOWHERE else", said I to myself as I squeezed through the crowd up the carpeted, potted-palmed, ornately mirrored and severely scrutinised staircase into the Yves St Laurent salon on Avenue Marceau—"nowhere else in the world", said I, half in delight, half in apprehension, "but Paris!"

Actually I had no idea if this was true, having never before in my life been to an *haute couture* opening. For all I knew it might be just the same at Halston's in New York, say, or Zandra Rhodes' in London. But I was obeying an image. So potent is the perennial French legend, so unremitting is the self-advertisement of France, so glazed are most of us by the purity of French culture, so distracted are we by the fact that, unlike almost everyone else in the Western world, the French do not speak English, that we have learnt to take France's word for it. France is France is France, she tells us, and dutifully I accepted the dictum as I crossed the salon floor and found my name on a gilded spindly chair beneath the windows.

The show was marvellous. The clothes were highly covetable. The models were vastly enter-

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taining. The audience was properly preposterous. There was the usual parade of gossip-column celebrities of the kind which, as I get older, I seem less and less to have heard the names of. There were many ardent devotees of M. St Laurent, including his Mum. There were photographers of great elegance who not infrequently photographed each other, and there were fashion writers of incalculable influence who were not photographed quite so often as some of them might wish.

There were plain women, beautiful women, foppish women, butch women, amiable women, fierce women. There was a woman in gloves. There were two women dressed apparently for a drive-in movie in St Tropez. There was a woman in purple sun-glasses. There were many women who, by wearing their spectacles on the tips of their noses, deluded themselves that they were not wearing spectacles at all. There was a woman in the front row who, seized by a kind of spasm, suddenly and violently powdered her nose in the middle of item No 74 (*Robe du soir de mousseline noire, brodée de jais et crêpe de Chine noire*). There was one tremendous social swell who looked as though she had omitted to dry her hair after a shampoo, and another who seemed to be disguised, improbably I thought, as a Bedouin virgin annointed for the nuptial tent.

And there was an unfamiliar woman whose mind seemed to wander during the performance, for often she seemed more interested in the audience than the couture, sometimes she looked vacuously at the ceiling, and once she was seen to be writing what appeared to be comic verse on the back of her programme. That was me, thinking about France, *haute couture*, civilisation, and all that.

HERE IS the verse I wrote. It reflects partly the most remarkable of the St Laurent models, the haunting and rather disquieting American Jacklyn Miller, and partly the Paris which, in its usual way, preened itself, part charm, part curmudgeon, outside the salon that day:

I try and try, but never find,
Another bird of quite my kind—
None with such a spectral eye,
None with such a hollow cry,
None with feathers quite so sleek,
Or such an interesting *beak,*
Can it be, O can it be,
That there is only One of Me?

AMONG *Jan Morris's recent contributions to* ENCOUNTER *are "From the Home of the Dodo", (November 1975), "Views from Lookout Mountain" (June 1975), "Singapore" (January 1975) and "Hongkong" (July 1974).*

There is to the self-esteem of the French a touch of arrogance, almost disapproval, which *haute couture* at its grandest well expresses. The knitted cardigan jacket was one of St Laurent's specialities at that showing, and when Ms Miller wore one she assumed an air of slightly stoop-shouldered and supercilious appraisal, rather in the Celia Johnson mode, which irresistibly suggested to me some high-principled colonel's lady of the 1930s, say, inspecting the sitters-out at a regimental ball. "Get up, you fool", I almost heard the subalterns hiss to each other as she bore down upon the sofa: but no, there on the central cushions was only Mrs Eugenia Sheppard, doyenne of the New York fashion critics and long impervious to every last innuendo of the Paris salons.

And certainly that Simla disdain is nothing new to France. It has sustained her throughout her history. The French follow Kipling's code, and treat success and failure just the same. A haughty pose has been essential to the very idea of Frenchness, for the constant theme of French policy has been the uniqueness of France. France, and especially Paris, is the ultimate. Only One of Me! Here, the French have long persuaded us, the civilisation of Western man stands at its apogee, and here alone a sense of style informs all life's activities, as the sense of divine order governs the daily conduct of Islam.

IN THE DAYS OF General de Gaulle the conviction found its chief outlet in *la gloire*: in military display, in old-school patriotism, in a somewhat Philistine national discipline. Under President Pompidou it took a gentler but hardly less grandiose course, and a France made confident by economic success consciously set out to re-establish herself as artistic and cultural leader of the West. It was an uphill task, for the spirit of *avant-garde* had deserted Gaullist Paris for more stimulating ambiances; but there was plenty of money about, and President Pompidou himself set the pace by redecorating the Elysée Palace in a style that made all your White Houses, Buckingham Palaces, and Kremlins look frumpishly suburban.

This was diplomacy, as well as pride. The intellectual prestige of France has long been used as an instrument of State, propagated across the world in Lycées, Maisons de France, visiting professorships and peripatetic Ministers of Culture; and the stifling traditionalism of the Gaullist régime, far from enhancing the French presence, had badly dulled it. Pompidou was a Gaullist himself, though, and he believed that the Gaullist instinct for formality, centralism, and what the French themselves graphically call *gigantisme*, might be combined with a new

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cultural initiative to make Paris supreme once more among the creative capitals.

So it was Pompidou, not long before his death, who launched the nation upon the most terrific of cultural demonstrations, truly the *haute couture* of Frenchness, the National Centre of Art and Culture off the Boulevard de Sébastopol in Paris. Talk about gigantism! This vast and to my taste indescribably hideous structure, well under way already, looks as though a couple of oil refineries, a dry dock, a roller-coaster, and the stock pile of a steel foundry had all been compressed into an oblong mass, and deposited in the middle of an ordinary Paris square over the river from Notre Dame.

It is to be a sort of central clearing bank of culture—a centre, its publicists say, "of all the activities of the spirit." Here the whole Western culture, the whole civilisation if you like, is to be given a Parisian form and reason. It will be a machine, according to its architects, capable of "receiving information, processing it, and giving it back again." It will be theatre, museum, library, cinema, design centre, exhibition hall, conference room, workshop, restaurant and hanging garden, all in one, and allied to it will be a vast subterranean laboratory for research into music and acoustics. The whole complex is expected to cost about 19 million dollars, and "will resemble", say its spokesmen, "nothing known—the most prestigious cultural centre in the world. . . ."

Gosh! There has been much opposition to this project, from artists and scholars as from conservationists, but I suspect all the same that its particular brand of swank catches a true spirit of Paris. Pride of place, pride of country, pride of French logic and schematic skill, is seldom absent from this capital, even from activities of the spirit. After the show I asked St Laurent if, when he presented his own lovely imaginings, he was consciously contributing to the splendour of France. He smiled rather distantly. He was, he said, he was.

BUT *haute couture*, itself a sort of Gaullist activity, is not what it was. No longer do the world's reporters flock to the Paris openings: only the fashion specialists go now. To be chic is generally un-chic these days, and most of those influential ladies at the St Laurent opening would not be considered well-dressed if they had been attending the annual Mothers' Union tea-party at my village home in Wales—least of all, I may say, the Bedouin virgin. Ready-to-wear clothes are much more important nowadays, and indeed the Paris designer whose name is most deliberately dropped these days, Chloe, makes nothing else.

St Laurent himself largely achieved this. He was powerfully influenced by the spectacle of the students at their barricades in the anti-Gaullist riots, and he translated that experience into the cult of shirts and jeans, unisex, radical, liberated, cheap, which has so changed the lives of women everywhere. Since then, as an unimpeachable expert remarked to me the other day, eyeing my Donald Davies skirt from Dublin, all that a woman needs to be elegant is a sweater, a pair of trousers, and a raincoat. St Laurent himself thinks that a woman should be able to possess a wardrobe, like a man, of clothes that would never date: when I suggested that in that case he couldn't have much feel for fashion as such, he answered me rather vehemently. "I *hate* fashion", he said.

And if *haute couture* is giving way to ready-to-wear and synthetics, so France too is liberalising her mandarin attitudes to culture. Gigantism is mercifully going out of fashion (there is nothing like hard times for improving a nation's taste), and more flexible modes are apparent. Giscard d'Estaing, who has already moderated the bombast of *La Marseillaise* by insisting upon less militarist arrangements, is now restraining *folies de grandeur* right and left. Several of the more awful Paris development schemes have been abandoned: a frightful skyscraper near the Place d'Italie, an expressway along the Left Bank, an ostentatious trade centre to replace the demolished market of Les Halles, a brutal development scheme in the agreeable Cité Fleurie. Since the War 70% of French building has been done without benefit of architect: now, as the President tactfully puts it, "architectural content is to be restored to French building policy."

Chauvinism, too, which was given a name in France and powerfully boosted by General de Gaulle, is perceptibly fading. When Pierre Boulez was invited to run the music research centre, he successfully insisted that his staff must be international, thus rejecting the Gaullist conception of French culture as a model to which all others should aspire. The National Centre of Art and Culture was designed by two architects, one Italian, one English, and its director of plastic arts is a Swede. Foreign directors have been working at both the Paris Opéra and the Comédie Française, more and more foreign artists are being honoured with one-man shows, and the international *avant-garde* is beginning to sense a return to more congenial attitudes in Paris.

IN THIS AGAIN, as in so much else, St Laurent is not merely an epitome, but a forerunner. He can scarcely afford, of course, to be insular—the pictures in his office, I noticed, included a

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multiple portrait of himself by Andy Warhol, a wedding photograph of the Shah and Empress of Iran, and a fetching picture of Mrs Mick Jagger. There can be nothing chauvinist to his love of France, and when he was subjected to the Gaullist privilege of serving *La Patrie* as a draftee in the French Army, he had a nervous breakdown. Yet as frankly as Bastille Day, as grandly as Napoleon's Tomb, as opulently as Brigitte Bardot, as elegantly as Maxim's, as unmistakably as all the other national emblems, hackneyed though they all too often are, he expresses an essence of France. He only reads one book, he told me—the eight volumes of Proust's *Á la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, over and over again. And its last volume, *Le Temps Retrouvé*, he has never read at all: he is saving it up, I suppose, for a last splurge of indulgent Frenchness, on a death-bed chaise-longue in his scented garden at Marakesh.

STILL THE AMBITION REMAINS, to restore France to her cultural pre-eminence as the mobile nuclear missiles, rumbling through Paris in the Bastille Day Parade, are meant to give her back her military consequence. Both aspirations are, I suspect, illusory. Strategically France remains what she can only be, a middle-sized Power dependent upon friends for her security. Culturally she is achieving not supremacy, which is an adolescent purpose anyway, but parity.

In Gaullist days there lay like a damper over the land not an artistic censorship exactly, but a tacitly accepted code of official values. Entrepreneurs, I am told, knew without asking which artists would be welcome in Paris, and which might excite the disapproval of the régime. André Malraux, De Gaulle's celebrated Minister of Culture, was scarcely the idol of the progressives, and his Government's ideas for the regeneration of the French arts were typified by reproductions of classic French paintings intended to bring a patriotic uplift to the Métro.

In such conditions, however vaguely felt, inspiration deserted Paris. Even the *couturiers* were challenged by brighter spirits in London and New York. The rigidity of French official standards, the dead hand of French rationalism, the élitism that is the pride of French officialdom, and which was of course the underlying rationale of *haute couture*—all these classic French symptoms repelled a generation to whom fluidity was all. Today, when the sense of flux has gone further still, and is giving way to a baffled nihilism, France is merely catching up again.

It is true that the students are only demonstrating for higher grants these days, but this is probably because, like students everywhere, they are up against the drab realities of recession. It is true too that when, during the *longueurs* of the St Laurent show, I wandered off into my own mystic avenues of universalism, I found the environment distinctly unencouraging to my attempts to identify with a dandelion root. Nevertheless Paris is much more relaxed than it was, much more sympathetic, much more receptive—much nicer, I think.

But supreme, no; there is no such thing. The Paris Opéra has been restored to its rightful place among the great opera houses of the world. The Paris political cabaret is once again lively and disrespectful. Artists and writers from everywhere are once more happy to live in this old city of the spirit. Devotees of the more intellectual pop music converge upon Paris as they converge upon Frankfurt, London, or Manhattan. Heretics and rebels are comfortable in Paris once again. But this is only an ancient capital coming to terms with a changing world, and resuming its proper place among its peers.

THEY TOOK ME round the place later, and I saw the whole St Laurent establishment at work. The atmosphere was calmer than I expected, because most of the excitement nowadays goes into the ready-to-wear collections. The average age was younger, too. There were not many of those aged bombazined seamstresses dear to the Parisian myth, stitching away at their work-tables as they have stitched since the Second Empire. Young women, young men too, were all over the place: there was even a young male accountant with long hair and a very trendy suit, just the man I needed, I thought, to do my income tax.

It did not feel like a commercial concern, though it is intensely commercial really (St Laurent has 90 retail outlets across the world, and under his name are marketed perfumes, spectacles, men's clothes, jewellery, handbags, hosiery and all sorts of lesser luxuries). It seemed to me more like the court and bazaar of some cultivated Sultan. Here were the shoemakers, the milliners, the tailors, the designers, the cooks in the canteen, the laughing nubile models, the heralds of the public relations department, the Ladies of the Antechamber keeping perpetual watch at the head of the stairs. Here was the Wazir, St Laurent's partner Pierre Bergé, at his large desk beneath a still larger portrait of the Sultan. Here for that matter was the Sultan himself, everywhere, in pictures on the wall, in posters, in the flavour and pace of the place, and in his unassuming person—shirt-sleeved in his studio workroom, driving off in his Volkswagen convertible, or stealing silently through the side door into his plush little office over the yard.

"I am", he likes to say, "an artisan", and I

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think he means it. Certainly an air of craftsmanship, more than art or profit, pervades the Avenue Marceau, and it is this very characteristic, this modest skill and diligence, which is what I myself most admire in France. Just as almost any dress design cut and sewn in the St Laurent workrooms would turn out delectable, so there is to the loving dedication of France herself, however misapplied, however doomed perhaps, something the whole world can envy but seldom emulate. All the little workshops of Paris, all the violin-makers and the book-binders, all the devoted pastry-cooks and leather-workers, all the unknown St Laurents working in shop and *atelier* across the capital—these are true glories of the French civilisation, and vindications of her pride.

I did not expect to like the world of *haute couture*. I expected to find it vulgar (so it was, too), and had been distinctly put off by the revelation that the Parisian fashion industry was descended directly from the social glitter of the Sun King's court, one of the historical phenomena I most fervently detest. But in the end I greatly enjoyed my visit to the Avenue Marceau, the quiet kindness of the staff, the charm of St Laurent himself, the fizz and blarney of it all, even the tired old imagery of France conjured up by the experience. I was right! It *could* only be Paris! In the afternoon I felt myself curiously attracted back to the salon, where another showing was taking place. This time I stood at the doorway at the top of the stairs, and peering between the heavy curtains, over the shoulders of the crowd, caught a shifting glimpse of the ritual movements within, the flutter of fanned programmes, the stride, strut and sway of the models.

When I looked above my head, though, I found a mirror set in the ceiling: and there I could see, upside down in lower torso, allegorically assembled in pilgrimage from Dallas and Maine, Tokyo and Edinburgh, Stockholm and Madrid, the not very elegant forms of the world's fashion buyers, impelled once more (come jeans, come crinoline) irresistibly to the old shrine.

London Commentary

A State of Almost Total Confusion

Labour Party Politics Today—By John Mackintosh

THERE CAN seldom have been a time when an ostensibly ideological party based on the combination of socialist and democratic theory of the late 19th and early 20th century has been in the state of philosophic confusion that now reigns in the British Labour Party. This covers all aspects of policy and has been clearly revealed in recent controversies over economic and social affairs, over "devolution", and in proposals for a far-reaching review of parliamentary procedure. I want to take these three areas of muddledom in turn.

The first thing that must strike any observer is: whom does this Government represent? Who matters? The older view would have been that a Labour Party—a party of the Left—would represent the Citizen, the Worker, the Consumer, against those with power in the society. Yet the chief feature of this Government is its close, almost subservient relationship to some of the most powerful groups in the country—*i.e.* the Trade Unions. When Mr Michael Foot drafted his Industrial Relations Bill to redeem his promise to the unions to do away with the old Conservative "Industrial Relations Act", there was no mention of the Press. It was excluded, being a "special case." But when the draft was shown to Mr Len Murray and the TUC leaders they could see "no reason" why the unions in Fleet Street should not have the same right as any others to operate the Closed Shop; so the Press *was* included. Later, when a number of backbench Labour MPs wanted some of the unfortunate consequences of this mitigated, they were subjected to a mixture of persuasion, pressure, exhortation, and vituperation. There is, I am afraid, no evidence at all that anything of this kind was turned on the TUC. But then its members were chosen (often for life) by trade unionists (or small handfuls of same). The MPs were only elected by the voters at large.

The same embarrassment has often occurred in

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recent years. Some 70% of the British electorate, including a majority of trade unionists, wanted an Incomes Policy by the summer of 1975; but nothing could be done till the leaders of the powerful producer groups acquiesced. Since then, despite demands for the utmost restraint (and soon for considerable cuts) in public expenditure, £175 million was spent on a first package of "job creation" and £162 million on rescuing a part of the Chrysler Corporation; there was a second job-creation injection of £200 million; and a special Bill was passed to keep work for five miles around docks reserved for dockers. All this was to pacify the leaders of these special pressure groups and to persuade them not to denounce the Government's own incomes policy.

But, and I have heard this argued, all these compromises to accommodate the unions are made in order to allow a Labour Government to continue with its pursuit of social justice, to enable the creation of an egalitarian, free and fair society. Yet, here again, there is mental muddle. The old assumption of democratic anti-totalitarian socialists was that there would always be a vigorous private sector and that the task of a Labour Party was to control and supervise it—sometimes taking recalcitrant, or ineffective, sections into public ownership—so as to ensure that the private sector served the needs of the community as a whole.

Now the Government has suddenly realised that there is a real danger of the total collapse of the private sector. The Minister for Industry, with his senior colleagues, announced a new strategy in late 1975 in which they would back expanding and successive parts of the private sector rather than prop up bankrupt industries. It is also clear that profits have been squeezed so far that the private sector has not sufficient resources to reinvest and to maintain its effectiveness. Thirdly, with each cycle of expansion, it is the public sector that grows while the private sector lags behind; so that its share, and the share of manufacturing industry, in producing the GNP has steadily declined.

But how can a Social Democratic party put a damper on public expenditure and the public sector? What size should the private sector be, and how does a socialist government produce conditions which allow this capitalistic part of the economy to flourish? Can it explain to its followers that political liberty and economic prosperity both require a viable private sector?

Even in the field of social welfare, the position is obscure. Inflation has pushed up wages while tax limits have stayed fixed in money terms. Many workers, earning below the average national wage, now contribute a quarter (or as much as a third) of their pay in income-tax and social-security payments. Instead of the old, simple, redistributive system whereby the rich paid for welfare benefits for the poor, a man with a wife and two children earning £35 a week now contributes about £10 altogether in deductions from his pay. The man next door who happens to be unemployed gets £23 in benefits, plus larger rent and rate rebates. Result: both relatively poor families have the same net incomes—only one is being taxed for working to help the man next door who is unemployed! In many ways, the most egalitarian and helpful action a Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer could take in the next Budget would be to raise the tax threshold.

SO HERE IS A PARTY dedicated to the expansion of the public sector, suspicious of (or hostile to) the "profit motive", believing in the redistributive effect of progressive taxation coupled with higher welfare benefits, having to try and go into a sharp reverse on all these beloved dogmas. It is being forced to look at the actual impact of policies and to try to recall the original social objectives which underlay these devices. Often, in consequence, it is being seen relapsing into contradictoriness and internal conflict.

If there is any single issue that could lead to the defeat of this Government before its full five years are out—and could then, if mishandled, prevent the Labour Party from ever winning power again—it is the problem of devolution for Scotland and Wales. On this issue the Party was absolutely clear from its inception in 1900 till the 1920s. Then, its democratic convictions and sympathy with the struggle, not for independence but for a measure of internal autonomy in Ireland, led to the policy of "Home Rule all round." The United Kingdom was to be retained, and was to be won for social democracy. But Scotland, Wales, and Ireland had sufficient distinct institutions and traditions to merit a level of local self-government enjoyed by associated states in a Federation.

Then the slump of the inter-War period—and also a cheap and vulgar form of Marxist analysis which kept emphasising the capture of "the Commanding Heights of the Economy" as the major socialist objective—led the Labour Party to abandon devolution. It became a centralising party. If there was anything wrong, any injustice or inadequacy, the government could be called in as a countervailing power, to create a new regulating agency or otherwise try to do the job. This was the old Victorian idea of the paternal state in which any Minister could run the Post Office or manage the Railways, and it was

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brought up to date by the addition of the Keynesian concept of the central management of the economy.

Life became more affluent in the 1960s; people began to be less worried about insufficiency problems, about unemployment, homelessness, and poverty, at least on a large scale. The electorate became more concerned about the "quality of life", about the level at which decisions were taken and about local participation. This had two effects. It grossly overloaded Whitehall, which was accepting responsibility for too many aspects of British life; at the same time, it led to a dramatic rediscovery of local traditions. To meet both these trends in Scotland and Wales, devolved regional administrations were expanded and developed. By the 1950s, Scotland was, in large part, administered by Scottish civil servants from a large regional ministry in Edinburgh.

BUT WHAT WAS the Labour Party to say about the democratic control of these 6,000 civil servants who were running the equivalent of nine English ministries from a base in Edinburgh 400 miles away from the democratic scrutiny of Parliament? Faced with this question, confusion was confounded, and in recent years has only become worse. One view, held by only a minority up to 1974, was that there should be a return to the policy of local autonomy, so that a specially elected set of Scottish MPs could control the Scottish Office. "Ah! but", said all my friends on the Left "this would lead to parochialism and particularism." (The Left are all against small-scale Scottish insularity, but they revealed precisely the same sentiments at a UK level when campaigning against the EEC!) The answer of some Scottish Socialists was to point out that there had been a Labour majority in Scotland ever since the War (except for one year, 1955–6). The response from the majority of the Labour Party in Scotland, as well as in England, was clear. They would rather be ruled for half the post-War period by the Tories and have total uniformity throughout Britain than enjoy prolonged periods of Labour control in Scotland if this meant diverging from the rest of the UK and losing sight of the need to "capture the citadels of capitalist power" in London.

WHY WAS THERE this passionate Left Centralism? Whence comes this disregard of local majorities reflecting local preferences and local problems? The answer is partly a fear that in many parts of Great Britain the Labour Party could never ever win a majority. The South West of England for example, would be Conservative forever if there were regional authorities. Secondly, there was the lingering old orthodox idea that certain policies are objectively right—and, if so, they should be imposed on everyone in their own interests! Finally, there was simply the deep, ingrained conservatism of a Labour Party which had had a majority in the House of Commons as its ultimate goal for so many years.

Then something happened. In the two general elections of 1974, the Scottish National Party moved into second place in Scotland, with 30% of the votes. Now, in early 1976, it is standing at 36% in the polls. How could there be any agreement about how to respond? Some wanted to accept the need for "more local decision-making" and go back to the old "Home Rule all round" policy. Others wanted to take the SNP head-on, and they refuse to move an inch. Some said that to contemplate a Scottish-elected authority was to distract attention from the "essential nation-wide class struggles." Some others even began to reconcile themselves to the constitutional break-up of the United Kingdom. Two Labour MPs broke away and set up a Scottish Labour Party in order to campaign for meaningful devolution and more radical left-wing policies.

ALL IN ALL, something close to total confusion obtains. Do democratic Socialists believe in taking power in Westminster so that they can impose identical policies from John O'Groats to Land's End? Even if overall control of the economy (now, in Europe, scarcely possible even at a national level) is the main objective of any British political party, ought Social Democrats not to accept that there are other centres of power, other decisions which matter to people? And if the Welsh or the Scots have slightly different ideas or priorities on these issues, why not let them apply these policies, especially if it does not detract from the national objectives of the party? This dispute has not been resolved. Nor is it likely that the balance of opinion will be known till the votes are counted at the end of the Second Reading of the Devolution Bill due in the autumn. By then it may well be too late.

IT MAY BE POSSIBLE to explain the intellectual inadequacies over devolution on the grounds that the issue has only reappeared as a serious matter in the last decade. But parliamentary reform has been with us as long as the institution has existed. Still there is no more clarity of thought on this subject. Mr Edward Short, as Leader of the House, introduced a debate on procedure in February. He said he wanted a far-reaching review of the working of Parliament to achieve what are, in practice, two totally

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contradictory objectives—on the one hand, to restore to Parliament some of its former capacity to check, control and supervise governments; and, on the other, to make it easier for such governments to railroad a great string of Election Manifesto commitments through the House.

In fact, the Labour Party has long been in a state of total intellectual disarray about the new kind of democracy it wants and about the appropriate function of a modernised House of Commons. Some of the Party activists believe in "direct democracy", and they resent any display of activity by Parliament. What The People Vote For at general elections should go through with as little time wasted on debate and discussion as possible. In this vein, Mr Short took credit for the device of the Referendum which was the logical extension of this principle. To hold a referendum on any major issue is a declaration that a decision by Parliament does not bind the country because it is not, in some way, a proper indication of the public's interests or wishes. Mr Tony Wedgwood Benn has carried this idea furthest with his notion of a "Yes and No" button on every television set; so that when a subject has been debated on television, there can be an immediate nation-wide vote as to which view should prevail.

But Mr Short also noted this: that public esteem for Parliament had declined precisely because MPs were seen to have little impact on public policy. Governments listened with deference to powerful pressure groups. Their members throughout the country gave these pressure groups their first loyalty precisely because they had an independent position and were able to gain results. If Parliament was to revive, the public must see the House of Commons affecting and altering government policies.

WHICH VIEW IS to prevail, and which is desirable, since clearly they are diametrically opposed? One fallacy is to suppose that all items in the Manifesto of the party that wins an election are publicly endorsed by the People. The Conservative programme is prepared by a nominated committee set up by the leader. The Labour manifesto is the work of a group of the National Executive and a few nominees of the Prime Minister. These lists of proposals may be (but often are not) vetted by the Cabinet or the Shadow Cabinet. Some will have been passed by the respective Party conferences. As for "the public", they can seldom accurately name half the main points in any party programme. And the winning party (or, more recently, the one that loses relatively less to apathy and to third parties) can come to power with as little as 38% of the votes cast!

Who can wonder Parliament is held in low esteem? Who really believes that measures collected in this way have any genuine popular consensus behind them? Why are they supposed to prevail at once over the views of MPs? But there is a much deeper reason for the acceptance of such measures. Parliament is basically organised, to use the current jargon, on "adversarial" lines. It is the continuation in the Commons of the battle for power that goes on in a general election. This is why a measure like the recent Dock Labour Regulation Bill was passed when it is almost certain that a *majority* of the House of Commons disliked the measure. But so long as MPs of a ruling party can be told that if a measure is defeated the Government will fall, they can be whipped into line.

If the forthcoming major review of our parliamentary procedure wants to restore a measure of respect for the House of Commons and for its contribution to public policy, then methods will have to be found of reducing the adversarial form, the House's aspect of continual political conflict. This, in my view, could easily be done, and two measures would do much to help. The first is to change Parliament to a fixed term. If MPs knew that there would be no sudden election and that the government would have to carry on irrespective of occasional defeats on specific issues, they might be much more ready to intervene actively, intelligently, conscientiously.

Secondly, select committees could be set up to cover each major department of state; and these committees could be given a legislative role, taking the committee stage of bills. (At present this work is done by standing committees which proceed like a minor version of the House itself, with similar clashes between a government majority and an opposition minority, the former always winning.) Not only could select committees examine bills properly before voting on them, but the Select Committee on Expenditure could have the power to vote funds before the moneys were actually granted.

It is interesting that the Government's White Paper on a Scottish Assembly actually proposes both these reforms for the subordinate Scottish Parliament—a fixed term and an effective committee system—simply because the UK government wants to see close control of the future Scottish executive. But (judging by Mr Short's grudging remarks about the few weak select committees operating at present) there is no willingness to contemplate similar reforms for Westminster.

Nor is this surprising—for the intellectual conflict between belief in a direct (or "plebiscitary") democracy and the value of a representative chamber with real power to supervise,

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and sometimes delay or change government policies, has not been resolved.

So the Labour Party remains in this direction-less state. The Conservatives are in no better position. The only party that flourishes in Britain is a one-issue party: the Scottish National Party; and its greatest asset is that this one issue can be used as an excuse for not thinking out a coherent answer to any of these questions, and even for failing to consider the future relations between England and an independent Scotland.

Is it too much to hope that, as we blunder along, it will slowly become apparent that the first requirement is a measure of some clear thought about the kind of society and political system that is desirable for Britain in the remainder of this century?

The Repose of Thomas Otway

This is the manner of staying up late,
The true professional egging on his eyes
Which would see cesspools in dreams
But here are digging up words. Better, though,
To write ridiculous speeches for actors
Than encounter one's own soul. Frustration
Travels, but life comes down to raving.

Cartloads of vowels come from the butcher's,
Our actresses shut their mouths on them.
The state is being blown up, that's my story;
I have no natural way with comedy
But unfrocking pain. This leaden age would do
If we had never seen the golden armature
Of men born into their full faces.

I shall die young. I shall speechify at God.
Treachery, betrayal, that's the run I'll make.
Society's this vile Senate, its law
Corrupted. Other men's cadences ruin me.
I have written words for the world, now I hear them—
Death is just a metaphor of love,
To live in peace under a perfect rule.

Peter Porter

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The End of the Raj

Paul Scott's Novels as History—By MAX BELOFF

MRS GANDHI'S coup has raised once more the question of Britain's legacy to India. After Independence in 1947 it was possible and fashionable to suggest that the outcome of the half-century struggle was satisfactory for all concerned. The British had fulfilled their mission and withdrawn in peace. India, left with a powerful non-political civil service and non-political army, each the creation of British rule, could develop its commitment to liberal and democratic values. Partition was, of course, unfortunate—unity had been one of Britain's gifts to the sub-continent—but was not fatal. The human sufferings of the partition period itself were never very present to British minds—in 1947 the British had other things on their minds—and would presumably be forgotten with the passing of time. India was the country from which the rest of the "Third World" could learn. And freed of the passions and jealousies and prejudices that were the result of subjection on the one hand and domination on the other, the British and Indian peoples could develop bonds of friendship and cooperation.

It may still be so. Yet the coup, following upon the further division of Pakistan, does suggest other perspectives on the future. Is it possible that the connection between Britain and India will prove an altogether transient affair, and that India will return to social forms and political patterns primarily of indigenous origin? Will de-colonisation be followed by de-Westernisation?

Such ideas, consciously entertained or not, have already had their effect on the historical treatment of the last period of the British Raj, for instance by the "Cambridge school" of historians of India, as well as in India itself. It is no longer so much a case of Simon Commissions, Round Table Conferences, Government of India Acts and the rest—but of what was happening on the ground as political groups and parties found their way to self-expression and the manipulation of power and influence in a society in which traditional cleavages of caste and kin, of class and religion, of locality and language were still of decisive importance for the events themselves and as a presage of a future independent India's polity (or will it be polities?). . . .

Meanwhile what of the other element in the relationship? What about the British? How important to Britain was the "possession" of India, and what have been the lasting effects of this aspect of Britain's past upon Britain's present. Or is its only memorial to be the Indian component of its new multi-racial phase? To begin even to speculate upon these questions, it is clearly desirable to understand what the Raj actually meant to Britain in its heyday and the whole complex of reasoning and feeling that brought about the final débâcle of British rule in so incredibly short a space of time after all the brave words about "gradualism" and the need for a long "transitional" period of political apprenticeship.

HISTORIANS OF BOTH THESE THEMES have not been lacking and will not be lacking in the future. Yet the subject is one to which the historian's techniques, however refined, may not be able to do justice. For, in the end, what was decided by governments depended upon their response to a whole series of pressures, some of them no doubt at least in theory identifiable and even quantifiable, others, however, much less easy to grasp and define. What the British thought and felt about India between 1935 and 1947 was the product of a great many personal experiences of civilians and soldiers, of businessmen and reporters, of missionaries and policemen. And it was not only their own experience that counted but that of earlier generations who had come to

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India and grown to love or hate it, and of all those who had never been to India but whose first glimpse of the exotic had been in the pages of *Kim*.

For these reasons, the role of the novelist in exploring the relationship between the two peoples has always been a crucial one; and novels are an historical source that we are only now beginning to exploit. For the novelist has the freedom both to present the circumstances of the case, and through his personages to evoke either directly or through symbolic reference the complex of feelings, physical and moral, that go to make up the experience as a whole.

OF THOSE WRITERS who have attempted to distil the last years of the British in India in fictional form, the most ambitious and the most successful is undoubtedly Mr Paul Scott. With his latest book, *A Division of the Spoils*, he completes the closely interlocking quartet of novels dealing with the last two decades of the Raj that he launched with the publication in 1966 of *The Jewel in the Crown*.[1] For the literary critic a series of long novels which presuppose each other, but though dealing in part with the same set of characters do not remain bound by chronological rigidities and treat their fates in a complicated counterpoint, raises interesting questions of technique. Was the whole design conceived as a unity from the beginning? Did the characters present themselves to the author in the round, or did they take hold of the author's imagination and develop along their own lines? Is there a version of the events themselves that the author keeps in reserve and never wholly reveals, so that all we ever get are the conflicting versions of the participants in them, or of those who get to know about them through the gossip of club or bazaar?

Questions of this kind could be asked about the work of other writers who have attempted to work on this scale—for instance Lawrence Durrell. Despite the fact that Durrell is a much more conscious artificer with words than Paul Scott whose characters are less articulate than Durrell's and in whose case it is often simplicity of feeling that has to be conveyed, there is a resemblance distantly in theme as well as in treatment between the two quartets both relating to worlds that have ceased to exist with the End of Empire. The historian's questions are different. Has Paul Scott succeeded in making Britain's retreat and the partition of India that followed it —the preparations for which form the "political" background to the just-published *A Division of the Spoils*—more directly intelligible than these events might otherwise be to us? Can he convey both what these events meant to those affected directly by them and their wider significance? Has he succeeded—where many Indians would argue that E. M. Forster failed—in apprehending true Indian feeling about relations with the British?

The last of these questions is one that only Indians can answer. It is a challenge that Paul Scott only tackles obliquely, since his principal Indian character Hari Kumar (Harry Coomer)—British educated to the extent of partial alienation from his own community's values but rejected by the British as belonging to the "other side" of the divide—is too special a case upon which to base an answer. Still, in the minor rulers and the Congress politicians of the last book and in minor figures in the earlier volumes there is ample material for anyone trying to assess Paul Scott's achievement in this respect.

Nevertheless, the book is to a much greater extent about the British in India and their view of their role there—whether as officers of an Indian regiment (the "Pankot rifles"), or as civil servants and policemen striving to keep the country functioning in the face of the hostility of nature, growing political disaffection and the ever-present threat of violence, unpredictable in its incidence and uncontrollable while it lasts, and for the War years with a powerful enemy at the gates able to recruit for its own purposes some of those Indian soldiers upon whose presumed fidelity to Crown and regiment much of the self-image of their officers depended.

IN DEALING WITH THESE men and their reactions to the situation into which hereditary connections or mere chance had placed them, Paul Scott does convey the full tragic significance of the combination between a sense of duty and a sense of permanent alienation from those to whom the duty was owed that is at the heart of the matter. Paul Scott is perhaps even more successful when he deals with the women in this situation. The stereotype of the *memsahib* has now been destroyed once and for all, one would hope. For the portraits that he draws of British women in India—whether missionaries, or serving in the War effort, or as simply occupied with the conventional trivialities of cantonment or hill-station society—are all individually etched. They respond to India in different ways: with devotion, affection, indifference or even hatred, but it is an individual not a collective response.

Nor is this elucidation of the feminine element

[1] *A Division of the Spoils*. By PAUL SCOTT. Heinemann, £4.90. The earlier novels in the series are available in hardback from Heinemann, and paperback from Panther. They are: *The Jewel in the Crown* (1966, £2.50, 75p), *The Day of the Scorpion* (1968, £3.50, 75p), *The Towers of Silence* (1971, £2.75, 50p).

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a diversion from the main theme. It is a commonplace of social historians of India that it was the coming of the white woman to what had been "an Englishman's world" that brought about that social division between the communities which so complicated the political problems of British rule. And even when social constraints were a little loosened the reluctance to contemplate the sexual involvement of British women and Indian men remained a rooted one. Thus while it might be easy to mock Paul Scott by asking why it needed four long novels to deal with the question of whether Hari Kumar raped Miss Manners (and why, if innocent, he was punished for it) it is also true that this central incident in the story is at the same time its crystallising factor. For, in his prosecution of Kumar, the policeman Merrick reveals how personal feelings of class as well as of race—unlike Kumar Merrick is not "a gentleman"—can distort and envenom what should be the processes of impartial justice. So that the British social scene with its own internal frictions and enmities is transported into India and adds yet another complication to the unnatural relationship between the races (of which Merrick's own homosexual inclinations directed towards young Indians illustrate or symbolise yet another facet).

TO RULE JUSTLY required remoteness. To allow personal feelings to enter into the matter was to commit the gravest dereliction of duty and one therefore that had to be denied and concealed. Yet remoteness is only compatible with rule when ruler and subject have their allotted and unquestioned places in the scheme of things. The British in India—whether military or civilian—were leading an essentially garrison-like existence. (Paul Scott's narrative on the whole keeps away from the great cities—though less so in the last instalment partly set in Bombay; for in the great cities the number of those on the margins of the two communities would be more numerous and the garrison-quality of life perhaps a little modified.) But that acceptance could not be guaranteed. There was a sense of helplessness as British notions of Self-rule and Democracy were turned against the British "guardians." The tendency among those most deeply identified with the old ways was to seek refuge in nostalgia, in the cultivation of the traditions of the Regiment, the lore of the Station, the memories of what were thought of as simpler and happier times. But their position was undermined not only by the increasing pressures from the Indian environment, stimulated by British diplomatic and military defeats, but also by the growing sense of indifference at home, of the

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rejection of the very values of Empire to which their lives had been devoted and those of their women and children at least in part distorted.

It is only in the fourth and latest novel, *A Division of the Spoils*, that Paul Scott introduces in Sergeant Perron of Field Security a character able to reflect directly upon this underlying theme. Himself still imbued with the sense that there was or should be some reciprocity of feeling towards India from a Britain which had derived profit and power from its rule, Perron reacts with muted questioning to an expression of the new view that since "India costs more to keep than it is worth" it must be allowed to go "as quickly as possible."

> "It's taken me no more than three months to write it off as a wasted asset, a place irrevocably ruined by the interaction of a conservative and tradition-bound population and an indolent and bone-headed utterly uneducated administration, an élitist bureaucracy so out of touch with the social and economic thinking of even just the past hundred years that you honestly wonder where they've come from."

Perron's own views are less affected by irritation and contempt and the simple balance-sheet approach of the economist:

> "For at least a hundred years, India has formed part of England's idea about herself and for the same period India has been forced into a position of being a reflection of that idea. Up to say 1900 the part India played in our ideas about ourselves was the part played by anything we possessed which we believed it was right to possess (like a special relationship with God). Since 1900, certainly since 1918, the reverse has obtained. The part played since then by India in the idea of Englishness has been that of something we feel it does us no credit to have. Our idea about ourselves will now not accommodate any idea about India except that of returning it to the Indians in order to prove that we are English and have demonstrably English ideas. . . . But on either side of that arbitrary date (1900) India itself, as itself, that is to say India as not part of ourselves, has played no part whatsoever in the lives of Englishmen in general (no part that we are conscious of) and those who came out (those for whom India had to play a real part) became detached both from English life and from the English idea of life. Getting rid of India will cause us at home no qualm of conscience because it will be like getting rid of what is no longer reflected in any mirror of ourselves."

The converse was not true, as Perron saw it. India would find it hard to get rid of the reflection of England in the Indian mirror because the English presence had been a reality, and often a harsh one. And one can indeed see how, despite the friendships that can be and have been maintained and created between Englishmen and Indians since Independence, there is a collective sensitivity on the part of Indians towards criticism of their handling of their own problems when it comes from Englishmen in particular.

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

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Why else does Mrs Indira Gandhi seek to obliterate in the Indian public mind the fact that she, like her father before her, is for better or worse the product of an English public school and University education?

THE NOVELS THEMSELVES do not look that far into the future. What concerns Perron and presumably his creator Paul Scott is the relative insensitivity of Britain (and of Britain's new rulers in 1945) to their own responsibility for the human tragedies on a major scale that were the product of Britain's precipitate departure and of the abandonment of their implied pledges to the rulers of the Indian States and their peoples. Could we escape so easily all guilt for the massacres of Hindus by Moslems (and vice versa) of which in *The Division of the Spoils* we are given a horrifying glimpse, all the more telling because of the narrator's restraint?

This indifference is personified for Perron in his aunt Charlotte who held single-mindedly to the view that "a British presence in India was an economic and administrative burden whose quick off-loading was an essential feature of post-War policy in the Welfare State", and who could see the responsibility for the massacres as simply "that of the people who attacked and killed each other." "There was", Perron writes, "no arguing with this, but it confirmed my impression of her historical significance (and mine), of the overwhelming importance of the part that had been played in British-Indian affairs by the indifference and ignorance of the English at home."

FOR THOSE WHO WANT to make their own effort to recapture the atmosphere of the last fifty years or so of the Raj, the warning by Mr Philip Mason in his introduction to the series of BBC scripts, *Plain Tales from the Raj*[2]: "No one who wasn't there will ever understand what it was like" is one to take to heart. Yet, as those who listened to the series will recollect, these recordings of the memories of the men and women who were there, of the survivors of the Raj—admirably pieced together and edited—were moving as well as illuminating. It is true that it was on the whole the daily round, the little intimacies, that were remembered rather than the moments of great drama; yet it was the daily round that kept the Raj going and that is now the most difficult thing to re-enact mentally. The printed versions lack something of the poignancy of the voices, some now very elderly, and even of the accents; on the

[2] *Plain Tales from the Raj*. Edited by CHARLES ALLEN in association with MICHAEL MASON. André Deutsch & BBC, £5.95.

Goodbye Father

MAUREEN GREEN

Despite drastic changes in father's authority over the last century, his role has attracted little professional or popular attention. Yet every step that advances the rights of women and children diminishes father's rights and duties. Maureen Green, a journalist for many years on the *Observer* Magazine, assesses father's current problems through many interviews with divorced fathers, step-fathers, and others who find their role particularly untenable. A fascinating timely book. £3.95

On Trotskyism

KOSTAS MAVRAKIS

Trotsky — brilliant publicist, enthusiastic speaker, organizer of the Red Army, eminent member of the Bolshevik Party during the first years of the Russian Revolution—has often been depicted as a romantic figure by biographers. Kostas Mavrakis does not see him in this light. In this controversial work he submits Trotsky, his thoughts and work to a severe but fair critical examination. Originally published in France in 1972, this book caused so much debate that a revised and enlarged edition was brought out in 1973. This is a translation of the latter. £4.95

German Foreign Policy 1871–1914

IMANUEL GEISS

This analysis of the foreign policy of the German Empire from its foundation in 1871 to the first months of the First World War focuses upon those factors and actions that help to explain the outbreak of war in August 1914. It combines the discussion of domestic factors with an outline of major diplomatic actions at crucial periods of international relations during this time. *Direct Edition* £4.95

Routledge & Kegan Paul

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other hand the pictures and in particular the end-papers drawn from the Army and Navy Stores catalogue, help to round things out and the glossary of words, phrases and slang is itself a curious little work of piety which will be turned to when reading other books on this far from exhausted topic. Much work went into this series, and it was well worth while.

IT IS PERHAPS HERE that the novelist's advantage over the historian is seen most clearly. The historian is always concerned with what happened and so tends to see what happened as inevitable, and from that it is only a short step to justifying it. Few historians have treated the fall of the British Empire as something that did not have to happen in the way it did—and as an episode in which some important values (as well as many lives) were sacrificed for motives only partially pure. History is still being written by a generation that voted Attlee, Cripps, and Bevin into power in 1945. Things will change as time reveals more of their handiwork. But the novelist need await neither the opening of the archives nor the working out of the political and social consequences of actions past. Imagination can supply what we lack provided the groundwork of study is solid enough. One cannot read Paul Scott's quartet of novels without being moved; and what is the sense of studying history if it is not to move one and to widen one's moral sensibilities? His achievement is on any count a major one.

Doctors' Dilemmas & Quacks' Quips

For or Against Medicine—By HENRY MILLER

TWO VERY DIFFERENT views of medicine, each addressed to the layman, have recently been published. *Medicine*, by Jane Gray[1], gives an orthodox and unsensational account of modern medical education and medical practice appropriate for any interested reader or potential doctor and it touches intelligently on some of the new ethical problems that are so obtrusive a feature of the contemporary medical scene. Ivan Illich's *Medical Nemesis*[2] shows the other side of the coin with a vengeance. Having already to his own satisfaction debunked Education and Industrial Society, Illich now proceeds to perform the same exercise on Medicine.

Education is, of course, easy game. Very little is really known about the process; it is subject to absurdly violent fluctuations of fashion; and its practitioners often seem too helpless to defend themselves.[3] None of these considerations applied in the case of Medicine, and Illich's unbalanced polemic, heavily documented with highly selective quotations, is unlikely to carry much conviction.

Basically, his thesis is that "professionalised" medicine does more harm than good, that most therapy is harmful rather than beneficial, and that patients should be responsible for their own prophylaxis and treatment. One presumes either that he has never been ill, or that if he has been unfortunate enough to sustain a compound fracture, a peptic ulcer, or even a thrombosed pile, he has ready the kind of spontaneous cure that one might expect from a Russo-American *guru*, trained in theology and philosophy at a Roman Catholic university, and pouring forth an avalanche of baroque journalism from his affluent refuge in Mexico. The incredulous reader of this prejudiced harangue can only wonder at the seriousness and even respect with which his previous contributions have been greeted. A fair sample of his style occurs on the first page of his introduction.

> A professional health . . . care system . . . is sickening for three reasons: it *must* produce clinical damages which outweigh its potential benefits: it *cannot but* obscure the political conditions which render society unhealthy: and it *tends* to expropriate the power of the individual to heal himself and to shape his or her environment. [italics added]

One must, I suppose, make allowances for the fact that most of Illich's medical experience, such as it is, has occurred in North (and South) American contexts. But the inaccuracies of *Medical Nemesis* transcend parochial boundaries and cheerfully ignore reality in the cause of tendentious abuse.

> Epidemics . . . are not modified or any more decreased by the relentless performance of medical clinics than by the exorcisms customary at religious shrines.

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[1] *Medicine*. By JANE GRAY. David & Charles, "Professions" series, £2.95.

[2] *Medical Nemesis*. By IVAN ILLICH. Calder & Boyars, £1.25.

[3] See, for one exception, Sidney Hook's critique, "Illich's De-Schooled Utopia", in ENCOUNTER (January 1972).

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Yet Illich is not unaware of the virtual disappearance within a little more than twenty years of paralytic poliomyelitis from the developed world, as a result of exactly the kind of laboratory studies carried out in the kind of institutions which he regards with such ignorant contempt. Similarly wild journalism proliferates on every page.

> Analysis of conditions shows that the environment is the primary determination of the state of general health of any population.

In fact Mr Illich should carefully choose a new quartet of grandparents if he is anxious to avoid most of the conditions that so alarm him. It is perfectly true as he states, that diphtheria was not conquered by chemotherapy; but it has disappeared where immunisation programmes have been effectively undertaken under the umbrella of orthodox public health medicine—and not as a result of jogging, bicycling, living on all-bran and honey, or transcendental meditation. It is also true that antidepressant drugs can cause impotence and prostatism, to say nothing of dryness of the mouth. But they have also kept thousands of patients with serious mental illness at work and have prevented many from committing suicide.

> Replacement therapy lessens the direct impact of diabetes, but only in the short run.

The simple answer to this is the traditional one that "in the long run" we will *all* be dead.

Illich's tone is an appalling combination of the apocalyptic and the platitudinous. All doctors know that powerful drugs and major operations sometimes have serious complications. So do non-treatment and self-treatment. But it is difficult to accept the implication that an amateur is safer than a professional who has devoted years to the study of patients and their diseases. The initial statement of this book that "the medical establishment has become a major threat to health" is nonsense. Despite the 258 footnotes that disfigure Illich's text, it is highly improbable (as well as very satisfactory) that his book is unlikely to discourage anyone who needs medical treatment from seeeking it at professional hands.

DR JANE GRAY'S BOOK is very much more entertaining than her brief would suggest, and it is difficult to imagine a more appropriate, accurate and comprehensive layman's guide to the profession, its opportunities and its problems.

Perhaps partly because of her own professional orientation she gives the impression of accepting the "family doctor" as the sheet-anchor of medical practice, quoting both the increasing percentage of British medical students (nearly half) now opting for general practice, and the move towards its revival in North America from which it has virtually disappeared especially in the great conurbations. Her view is, of course, supported by the British Medical Association, the Department of Health, and (needless to say) the newly-fledged Royal College of General Practitioners, which takes itself very seriously indeed and sees nothing even faintly paradoxical in regarding "generalism" as a specialised specialism. Standing outside the arena of medical politics after more than thirty years' busy and exhilarating practice, the present writer would point out that most of the best and cleverest students in any year still aspire to specialist practice in the stimulating environment of a hospital clinical team—and this despite the fact that, after an infinitely less arduous, exacting and prolonged clinical training, the Health Department has carefully and with characteristic fatuity ensured that the lifetime earnings of a general practitioner are likely to exceed those of a neurosurgeon. Advances in medicine spring from specialisation; and in every other part of the developed world the specialised skills of the man who can safely remove a brain tumour are more highly valued and rewarded than those of a doctor who can safely prescribe a box of tablets for the common cold.

The North American scene remains indeterminate. Certainly some governmental agencies are working hard to redirect young doctors into family practice. But here they encounter a problem that perturbs medical administrators from northern Greece to Siberia—the reluctance of many professionals to face the numbing consequences of isolation from their colleagues. They rarely opt for anything more than a relatively brief stay in a remote rural environment—and yet continuity of care is an essential feature of any form of serious clinical practice. However, the real problems of medical care in countries as

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far apart as Australia and northern Norway arise from geographical factors; and, if the will and the money are available, adequate and sophisticated transport can solve most of them.

On the future of general practice in urban environments my views are heterodox. I believe it will perish, to be replaced in due course by specialist polyclinics of the kind familiar in Eastern Europe and some parts of North America. I have a suspicion that Dr Gray would prefer "group general practice" with a *soupçon* of specialisation. I do not agree. The "specialoid" is the most dangerous of all doctors; and, believing as I do that the properly trained specialist is likely to make a better showing at general practice than the generalist at undertaking a specialty, I would favour all except the most highly specialised laboratory doctors or experimentalists playing some part in the administration of primary medical care. All except the most timid do so anyway, at any rate amongst their friends and families. But perhaps my bias—as an unfrocked consultant—is as transparent as Dr Gray's!

Matters of History

Some Recent Fiction—By JAMES PRICE

JOSEF SKVORECKY, now a member of the English faculty at the University of Toronto, is a novelist, translator, ex-publisher and editor, and an authentic voice from that Czech generation which was silenced, or exiled, as a result of the events in Prague of August 1968. *All the Bright Young Men and Women*, published in Canada four years ago, was an account of the intellectual flowering of Czech cinema in the '60s, exceptional for its first-hand knowledge and sharpness of irony. The jacket blurb of *Miss Silver's Past*,[1] a novel with a background of publishing, tells us that it appeared—amazingly enough—in Prague in 1969, but—less amazingly, perhaps—the second printing, of some 90,000 copies, was seized and destroyed by the authorities in 1970. (That figure of 90,000 copies, for a country with a population of 15 million, provides an occasion for some chastening reflections about British fiction publishing.) The book was nevertheless filmed in 1969 (directed by Václav Gajer and not I believe seen in the West) and now appears in an excellent English translation by Peter Kussi and with a preface by Graham Greene.

Why Graham Greene? His preface is a short statement about Skvorecky as exile, exiled as much in Prague as absent from it. It mentions his early novel *The Cowards*, which cost him his editorial job, and quotes from one of two short works which have not yet appeared in English. Among the marks of the exile which Skvorecky exhibits is "the sadness in comedy, the comedy in sadness." Greene links this exile's condition to the literary suppression and party-line dogmatism described in the novel. Yet the real value of this preface lies in its signature, a pointer to the kinds of pleasure awaiting the reader and the kinds of irony and fleshly awareness and cynicism deployed by the author.

MOREOVER THE PLOT has a pleasingly Greenean shape, apparently rambling but suddenly at the end falling into place, with a denouement which leaves the hero-narrator winded with the mortifying realisation that in the drama in which he imagined himself to be a leading actor he had, in fact, only fulfilled a supporting role. Karel Leden is an editor in the State publishing house in Prague, skilled in the arts of survival, an indulgently drawn timeserver who seeks simultaneously to earn the respect of his progressive colleagues—most notably the stupendously-breasted Dasha Blumenfeld—and to preserve the good opinion of his superiors. One Sunday by the river he meets Lenka Silver, a dazzling golden-brown apparition in a blue bikini, and falls in love, love meaning a complicated set of feelings set down by Skvorecky with exemplary clarity of expression. It is natural for him to pursue her and to assume that thus pursued she will eventually capitulate. It is a simple question of getting into her bed, a sport at which he is adept; and he applies himself to it diligently, telephoning her against her instructions, throwing over his ballet-dancer girl-friend Vera (of whom he has tired), even insinuating himself into her apartment to attempt physical persuasion, persuasion rudely discontinued by a violent knee in the crotch. He is unregenerate, and remains so, a man whose sexual tactics belong to another situation.

[1] *Miss Silver's Past*. By JOSEF SKVORECKY. Translated by PETER KUSSI. Bodley Head, £3.50.

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THE POLITICAL SATIRE is similarly two-edged. The picture of totalitarianism in intellectual life is real, and comic, and horrendous. "It would all be hilariously funny", writes Graham Greene, "if it were not the truth." But Karel, through whose eyes we see it all, is one whose whole thinking is conditioned by this political atmosphere and who has learnt how to survive in it: he knows no other. He is corrupt, and he has got used to the fact; there is no evidence, I think, that he desires any change. Just as Lenka Silver turns out to be an Antigone, with objectives of her own which do not coincide with his simple ambition of getting into her bed, so Dasha Blumenfeld and her protégé novelist have ideals which render him a mere bystander. Even the buffoon Vasek, whom Karel despises and patronises by turns, fails to play an appropriately despised and patronised role: Lenka, to Karel's stupefaction, makes him her lover.

Miss Silver's Past is an expert and most beguiling entertainment. Part suspense mystery (the plot, admittedly, is not of a wholly surprising kind), and part political satire, it can be read for most of the time as a sexual comedy. Inevitably it reminds one of the intimate cinema of Forman, Menzel and Passer. People are seen as they are. There is suddenly all the time in the world for the pleasing erotic detail, the fall on a banana skin, the painful irony.

THE CUBAN ALEJO CARPENTIER'S new novel, published twelve years after his last, first appeared in Spanish in 1974 and here appears in an English translation of great quality by Frances Partridge. *Reasons of State*[2] engages with history in a stately manner far removed from Skvorecky's supple, slanting involvement with the subject. The central character is the Head of State of a minor Latin American country. He is a man of culture, and we first meet him in Paris before the First World War where, with his servants and secretary, he is leading a life of voluptuous idleness, visited by tailors and literary people by day, enjoying the opera and the brothel by night. There seems to be no reason why this desirable existence should not last forever. But he has to return to his country to put down a rebellion, which—after raising money in New York by handing over part of his territory to the United Fruit Co.—he duly does. The slaughter he authorises is recorded by a French photographer, and when the Head of State returns to the pleasures of his beloved Paris he finds a chilly welcome: the Press has preceded

[2] *Reasons of State*. By ALEJO CARPENTIER. Translated by FRANCES PARTRIDGE. Gollancz, £4.95.

Harvard

The Secular Scripture

A Study of the Structure of Romance

Northrop Frye

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Five Nineteenth-Century Writers

J. Hillis Miller

The author suggests that Thomas de Quincey, Robert Browning, Emily Bronte, Matthew Arnold and Gerard Manley Hopkins all felt that the old forms of mediation between man and God had broken down. He discusses their efforts to replace or renew this mediation and to bring God back down to earth as a benign force inherent in nature and in the human community.
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From Consciousness to Conscience, Goethe to Camus

Edward Engelberg

The author argues that Conscience and Consciousness have slowly drifted apart from their once nearly identical meanings: inward knowledge of oneself. He demonstrates how the division shaped the attitudes of writers and thinkers, comparing Poe and Mann, Goethe and Wordsworth, Arnold and Nietzsche, and includes Kafka, Hesse, Camus, Hegel, Dostoievsky, James, Conrad and Freud in his analysis. **£7.20**

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him, and *Le Matin* has published a series of savage reports and pictures. He wouldn't have minded being treated as butcher in other cities, but "Paris was an Earthly Paradise, the Promised Land, the Shrine of Intelligence, the Metropolis of *Savoir-vivre*, the Source of all Culture."

He suborns another newspaper in an effort to rehabilitate himself, but it is now August 1914, and the affairs of a minor Latin American state are no longer front-page material. Then, while the Battle of the Marne is in progress, another uprising occurs in the Head of State's country and again he is obliged to return there. This time however an accident relieves him of the task of suppression, and he is able instead to concentrate on the development of his capital city, rapidly growing richer. Then a bomb goes off in the presidential bathroom, and from large-scale old-fashioned rebellions the Head of State's tribulations from now on assume the form of small skirmishes in a continuing revolutionary struggle which he only half understands. The war ends. There is a financial collapse. The police state tightens its grip; but the police are not now fighting people, but ideas. The representative of the Revolution is a Student, whom the Head of State interviews, in a baffled non-meeting of minds. Finally he is forced to abdicate. Back to the home of Cartesian reason he goes. But Paris has changed, he has aged, and things are not the same. He dies. The chapter epigraph is from Descartes:

> . . . those madmen try to make people believe they are kings, but they are only poor men who dress their nakedness in gold and purple.

HISTORY, IN *Reasons of State*, unrolls in a series of tableaux. The narrative viewpoint is distant, the tone measured, ironic and sonorous, the style baroque. It is a style which is flashy and shallow, where the Head of State is secure in his flashy, shallow power; and sombre and plain when his life is running out. There are profuse references to opera, music, film stars, literature, architecture, military and political affairs, and indeed a multitude of social and cultural indicators, so that nothing is seen in isolation and everything is seen in relation to something else. In this way the story of a tyrant and his eventual overthrow releases several other themes: an old autocracy giving way first to fascist repression and then to revolution, the unsoundness of stability of pre-Communist régimes, the rapid obsolescence of ideas, and the corruption of power. The characters move through the book like actors in fancy dress: we're not interested in them personally, only in the roles they play, and even though we see the Head of State in close-up his privacy is not violated and he remains a label, a title, living and fornicating and dying without our even knowing his name.

It is an ambitious novel, and although it is only just over 300 pages long it gives an impression of great historical scope, and it shows very considerable powers of analysis and organisation. Its weakness, I think, is that the analysis is an over-familiar one. It is not likely to cause anyone to revise their ideas about the course of events in pre-Castro Cuba, for instance. It dramatises an historical pattern, but without modifying the pattern or increasing our understanding of it. Its elaborations are on, and of, the surface: macabre, erudite, far-fetched, sometimes tedious and often enormously enjoyable, but ultimately inert.

SKVORECKY ENGAGES WITH HISTORY simply by being part of it. Carpentier engages with it by lining it up for our inspection and marching it up and down with the band playing. Jurek Becker, in *Jacob the Liar*[3], renders it into myth. Becker was born in Poland in 1937, he saw the ghetto in his earliest years, and his father was a survivor from Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Becker's story of a man who raised morale in the wartime ghetto by circulating imaginary reports from a non-existent radio was first written as a screenplay. When he failed to get a film made, he turned it instead into a novel, published in the DDR in 1969. Then further attempts were made at a film, this time ultimately successful; it was shown, an oddly muted occasion, at the London Film Festival last November. The English translation of the book is by Melvin Kornfeld, who also provides a preface in which he compares Becker to Sholem Aleichem.

Jacob the Liar faces the facts of history by making them into material for a storyteller. So a

[3] *Jacob the Liar*. By JUREK BECKER. Translated by MELVIN KORNFELD. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, £3.95, $7.95.

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fictional narrator, who is not Jurek Becker, tells the story of Jacob out of drunken, uncertain memories, post-war research, and speculation. At various points in the narrative he gives alternative versions of events. The effect of this method is two-fold. It enables an intimate humanist tale to be told about a time when personal life must have seemed an illusion; and this is the considerable achievement of the novel. Secondly, it presents that tale as if it were a tribal memory. I am not sure, if I were a survivor of the ghetto, that I would care to see in my own lifetime—that is, within the period when there are still thousands of people about who suffered there or who inflicted the suffering—historical events relegated to that comfortable status.

"Make It Old!"

New Poetry—By DOUGLAS DUNN

JOHNSONIAN *sententiae* on the fortunes and misfortunes that attend the life of writing are no longer possible unless whoever writes them is also willing to face that level of moral analysis. Kenneth Allott's career virtually invites that sort of approach. His two books of poems, *Poems* (1938) and *The Ventriloquist's Doll* (1943), established a reputation which, following a strange lapse of his creativity, was apparently not strong enough to be supported for very long by two books only. He became a case of literary disappointment to his contemporaries and a rumour to those younger than him. Once a co-editor of *New Verse*, he had been as deeply involved in literary life as any of the 1930s poets. Then, turning to an academic career at the University of Liverpool, he seems also to have turned his back on whatever ambitions he might have had in the 1930s, contenting himself with editorial work, and collaborating on plays. Glittering prizes, indeed.

It was less than certain that his *Collected Poems*[1] would ever appear. Anyone with a bibliographical turn of mind could be excused if they had decided that Allott's two books of poems had gone for good. Secker & Warburg are to be congratulated on bringing them back.

Roy Fuller in his Foreword says that the War drastically changed the conditions within which poetry was written. That is the reason he offers for Allott's winding down, and similar silences imposed on other poets of the 1930s. With no experience of what Mr Fuller refers to, I can only take his word for it. However Allott's halt was not abrupt, as the date of his second book shows. Historicising without experience and with few facts to go on, I still think Allott's silence has more to do with the climate of the 1930s than with the war which followed it. A. T. Tolley in his recent history of the decade, *Poetry of the 1930s*,[2] says of Allott that "his precocious virtuosity seems too easily attained." Some critics say the same of Auden: clever young men are seldom admired except by their clever young contemporaries. But the 1930s were full of precocious virtuosity, or precocity at least. And Allott was dedicated to Auden's existence, to the example of one of the many precocious boys in our literature—Donne, Marvell, Pope, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson and Browning were none of them late developers. There are almost literal examples of Auden in Allott's *Poems* (1938) in particular, where lines can be found like "Lovers whose outlandish lingo. . . ."; or, in imitation of Auden's synoptic panache, "From Ararat look down on the receding waters."

Present in Allott's writing as a source of energy and as a catalyst, Auden's influence could only wane when Allott (and others like him) began to grow more aware of themselves. With that drastic change of conditions, a poet like Allott would be the worse off for no longer having Auden's presence to support him. Allott had used Auden almost like a persona. The loss was substantial, though it is not merely a matter of Auden's removal or presence that Allott had used up the poetry he wanted to emulate. The 1930s was a decade in which poetry was peculiarly *emulative*. The end of the decade saw a coincidence of world war and the emigration of Auden (though that is important only to poetry), and Allott, understandably, found himself stranded. In such a predicament originality is nothing much unless accompanied by a decisive will to employ it, which it seems Allott did not have.

"These lives we are living,/ The things we call normal" are the burden of Allott's poems. His observations and embodiment of them are

[1] *Collected Poems*. By KENNETH ALLOTT. Secker & Warburg, £2.90.

[2] *Poetry of the 1930s*. By A. T. TOLLEY. Gollancz, £6.50.

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JOHN MURRAY

approached from curious angles. Realities are oddly perceived and presented at great speed in a welter of images and incidences—

From this wet island of birds and chimneys
Who can watch suffering Europe and not be angry? . . .

And I imagine sometimes at night emerging
The stunted pasty wonder of the slum,
Like a cracked bicycle frame
On which a short vocabulary is hung.

Allott's 1930s poetry often reads like a caricature of what, as students, we were told 1930s poetry was like but, after closer examination of Auden, Spender, MacNeice *et al.*, found it wasn't—a full-blooded and vigorous penetration into the climate of the times, and a divergence from it in images which have less to do with topicality than with an obsessive interest in time. Allott's poems are haunted by clocks.

Observation in his poems is almost always at the service of complaint. Laforgue is as close by as Auden. Existence is rendered as saddeningly grotesque and too much with us. "Ode in Wartime" from *The Ventriloquist's Doll* opens with:

O antique vistas of stone sarcophagi,
Silent except for the stammer of literature
Through millennia,
Whose yellowing relics caricature and festoon the
Dropped anonymous features of this ice-era;
All plasm shaped to human symmetry
Through shell-coiled generations of incessant downpour;
Assemble backward out of charred time's collapse.
Come,
Honeycomb each coxcomb
With drums for the dead and sea-green elegiacs,
Ring now like tinnitus in every year.
Hands be immersed in suffering like a surgeon,
And eyes, probe everywhere.

That the imperatives of that ornate verse, its form hardly functional, might be self-directed is a point difficult to avoid making. This rhetoric even incorporates a word used by the rhetorician, the Elder Seneca, "tinnitus" (which leads to Allott's pun) being his term to describe a jingling example of *declamatio*. The near-hysteria of the poem and the verbal passion and morbid severity of those that immediately follow it make it conceivable that his silence was induced by distaste for almost everything. One of his late lines reads "It is not here, not now, that every prospect pleases": a premature epitaph for the century.

ESTIMABLE AS ROY FULLER is, he is in the same game in which that line of Allott's represents a characteristic move. Mr Fuller is more genial with it, to be sure; his idea of the game is far more literary. Dedicating himself

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with increasing determination to his slogan—"Make it Old!"—and telling it the way it isn't (not falsely, but with some inaccuracy), he more and more assumes his role of a mandarin in retirement.

From the Joke Shop[3] is too much composed against the metronome, and if its tone is civilised it is also predictable. Civility *should* be predictable, but even in an age when decencies and civilities are in decline, men, and poets in particular, should re-examine the whys of the matter instead of merely grumbling.

Fuller writes as a man who would prefer to be a more civilising influence than is allowed to poetry in a late phase of capitalism. Committing himself against chaos, confusion and "barbarism", he attacks them without acknowledging that they are induced by the times. He treats the symptom, not the cause. What irks most in the book, however, is not its political evasions. These have to be seen in the context of Fuller's long and distinguished practice of verse writing, from which the emerging pattern is both instructive and infuriating. There is a polite banality in some of *From the Joke Shop* which I especially regret as it may deter younger readers from making a closer examination of this new book both for itself and in contrast to his earlier books. Of a dead bird he had once "stood as sentinel and victualler for", he says:

> *Perhaps some lack in me had then compelled*
> *Its anabasis to another lawn*
> *Where it did battle with a feline foe.*

The pointlessness of this mock-heroic idiom indicates the extent to which Mr Fuller has withdrawn from the argument that if poetry offers little or nothing in the way of *praxis* then there is some point in at least pretending that it can, for the sake of poetry itself and the life it ex-expresses. To acknowledge oneself as ineffective is to eat the most terrible food of all; it is to eat your own heart. To acknowledge poetry in the same way is to commit a sin against the Holy Ghost. It is perverse, and bad. But, as Stephen Crane's creature in the desert says,

> *" It is bitter—bitter," he answered;*
> *"But I like it*
> *Because it is bitter,*
> *And because it is my heart."*

Forbearance and disillusion are the salient features of *From the Joke Shop*. The first is admirable if the reasons for the second are truthful. When he evokes sky or trees, or a detail from his own garden—which fittingly

[3] *From the Joke Shop*. By ROY FULLER. André Deutsch, £2.25.

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BODLEY HEAD

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suggests the mood of retirement—forbearance is beautifully rendered—

Autumn: the leaf more insecurely hangs
Than hung the fruit.

Such images—dew on a lawnmower, chairs left out overnight—become perfections of themselves in a book which is excellently sustained and almost like one narrative, a long poem in bits.

At several points the note struck is more like this—

. . . I see quite clearly that my life's

Been pauperized by a shyness to confess.
For hardly recompense to show in art
The things one should have influenced in fact.

Art as intervention, as a potentially influential thing, has only theoretical status. I believe this to be true of art whether it attempts to influence the life of whoever makes it or to influence the world. That, I think, is what Mr Fuller has been in the process of recognising over the years. It is a more complex problem than I have stated—much more woven into the fabric of a life. Auden in "A Summer Night", in a famous verse, recognised the importance of that characteristically English obstacle—class. So too did Kenneth Allott in one of his best known poems, "Men Walk Upright":

It is the freedom of light, the right to go walking
Well fed in drawing rooms and gardens which has refined
Us if only to an impotence of anger.

Now that Mr Fuller's anger is directed primarily at those he calls "barbarians"—and he has been worrying about them for close on 20 years—he must surely start to take into account the class factor he has always avoided. First he must say just exactly who these barbarians are, what they stand for, and why he objects. "And still the barbarians have not come" now becomes, "My modest *aperçu* is that they're here." This is bleating about the bush in the accents of the Tory backbench. Worse still, it misrepresents his politics. It is not a concern for culture that leads him to it, or concern for that "island life, anachronistic, taciturn!" which he invokes in one of the poems (reminiscent to me of Orwell in the early paragraphs of *The Lion and the Unicorn*), but a suburban ethos too much loved. He forgets that what for him is an aggravated serenity is used by the suburban classes as a source of an attitudinising aimed at those less complacently comfortable in this "island life"; and that the process is here called "politics."

Mr Fuller is no reactionary; he is too intelligent for that, nor do I think he could move very far from what he called a "Marxist way of seeing things" in an interview with Ian Hamilton which appeared in *The Listener* a few years ago. Yet he is entrenched in a form of literary intelligence which younger poets, even if they cast their verses in metrical shape when it suits them, do justifiably believe ought to be amended. Which poet was ever entirely happy with the practice of his elders? Mr Fuller's literary intelligence is represented by a phrase such as "my modest *aperçu*." It smacks of a deckchair, a cat on your lap, the sun shining, and a pink gin handy to the thirst. I admit to the pleasure; I would never admit the language. Mr Fuller is refined to an impotence of anger.

ALTHOUGH HE DOES NOT consider himself prolific, Roy Fuller is in comparison with Bernard Gutteridge more than merely productive. Until a few poems recently appeared in The *London Magazine*, one book, *Traveller's Eye* (1947), was all that Gutteridge was known for; and even that early book must have been long gone from the catalogues. *Old Damson-Face*[4] is a selection from the earlier poems, with more recent ones added. His war poems might be familiar to readers of Ian Hamilton's *The Poetry of War*.

Of the pre-War poems "Holderness" is by far the best. Some more or less obvious touches of 1930s stylistics do give a date to it; but for all that Gutteridge's writing is closer to a feeling that is more pervasively native to the language than it is to one literary decade. The first line of the poem, "Here on this Yorkshire lawn with the smell of cut grass. . . .", is now obsolete and of historical interest. A bureaucrat took Holderness out of Yorkshire a couple of years ago and

[4] *Old Damson-Face*. By BERNARD GUTTERIDGE. London Magazine Editions, £2.25, paper £1.25.

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put it somewhere else. Like all of reorganised England, its name is part of the dream-country of old geography. Strangely, the poem's mood of homecoming, re-observation and nostalgia fits mysteriously into the changed facts of Holderness's administrative status. It is an excellent poem and should be in anthologies.

Gutteridge's writing is entirely without pretension. There is an impression in his work that he simply accepts what and where he is. In an autobiographical note appended to *The Poetry of War* he admitted he was "perhaps more myself on Johannesburg and Bombay racecourses" than in the jungles of wartime Burma. Always on the sane and secure side of whatever ambitions he might have held when in the 1930s he was printing and reviewing in *New Verse*, his work looks like a classic case of minor English verse. Which is neither faint praise, nor damnation.

RHYMES IN PATRICIA BEER'S *Driving West*[5] are often of the "half-" or "near-" variety. Her almost obtrusively lyrical intentions probably insist on some form of music to support them. Occasionally the result is a music that can hardly be heard, if at all. "Before" and "law", for instance, are not, in my accent, rhymes: they hardly even associate to form assonance. "Eyes" and "buzz" is another example. More poets are passing this off as rhyme than is really decent. There is something academic or half-hearted about accepting so approximate a music as in some way part of a legal craftsmanship, as fulfilling the unwritten laws of contemporary metrics.

When Ms Beer's rhymes are kept close to an idea of music you can actually hear (some poets would rhyme "idea" and hear", but I can't), the result is more than acceptable. Technically, Ms Beer is perhaps more scrupulous than fussy, which goes some way towards compensating for what to my taste is a lack of doctrinal excitement. In that lack I do see—self-effacingly—the virtue of her poems being directed at the imaginary reader but not wanting to change or flatter social or imaginative orders. The remark may seem a strange one. But for all the local disturbances of her lyricism her poems are not, in the context of contemporary poetry, in the merest way disturbing. To question death or love is

[5] *Driving West*. By PATRICIA BEER. Gollancz, £2.30.

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not disturbing in poetry, where such questions are familiar; unless the questions are new or surprising. Her poems have charm—a more serious literary concept than is usually admitted; few poets are as content with it as they should be. An example:

> *A heavy frost last night,*
> *The longest night of the year,*
> *Makes the land at first light*
> *Look spruced up for death,*
> *Incurably white. . . .*
>
> *Not far behind, a track*
> *Of frost is following*
> *That the sun cannot lick*
> *Completely green in time,*
> *Before night rolls back.*

Her writing is native. Observations are presented with a balance struck between the concrete and the intangibles of feeling. Things and feelings interact in the ways of the best nature poetry. Again, it is minor writing; but it pleases immensely.

"LARKIN" MIGHT BE the middle name of Simon Curtis, who certainly writes as if that was the case, and Betjeman his Godfather. *On the Abthorpe Road*[6] comes, too, with Kingsley Amis's recommendation; but versified and saddened querulousness is a formula for monotony. Indeed the scruffiness of the world which Mr Curtis writes about also infects his writing. Gruff English lightness, an iambic beat that practically made me sea-sick, does nothing to recommend the no-nonsense, commonsensical English manner which I suspect Mr Curtis's verses attempt to reflect. "Credences of a May Morning"—the style is anti-Stevens, presumably —begins:

> *I browse inside our stuffy hall*
> *Through envelopes with tenants' names.*
> Pharmacy Monthly*'s come for Paul,*
> *A postcard for Christine from James.*
>
> *A folded* Guardian *for the Macks;*
> *For Mrs Bartok in Flat Three*
> *An OHMS (rates, or tax);*
> *The weekly pools for 'doc' McGhee.*

Forgetting for a moment that you do not pay rates to the Queen, there is something instantly likable about Mr Curtis's clarity. Nor could I ignore that he is an effective point-maker (in, for instance, "Northamptonshire Lady") or that his verse can be pictorially evocative ("In November"). But I regret that his verses overstate a manner of writing which, as poetry,

[6] *On the Abthorpe Road.* By SIMON CURTIS. Davis-Poynter, £2.50.

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opposed to verse, cannot admit into it many of the acknowledged concerns and objectives of poetry of which sensuousness of language and intuition of worlds beyond the social are the most obvious. But the book is readable and "Nocturne" its best poem.

JOHN MOLE IS NOT the formal poet Roy Fuller is, and less chatty than Simon Curtis. "Playtime" in *A Partial Light*[7] is a villanelle, but not a good one; "The Box" is written in ballad metre; "In the Playroom" consists of three sonnets, inanely rhymed. Traditional techniques crop up elsewhere, but Mr Mole's best writing occurs when he is not intent on following a pattern mapped out more or less beforehand. When he bends the sound and feel of one word against another, for example; or when he has room to make an image in its own words without having to obey the dictates of the metre and rhyme of the line before or the line after—although that discipline can often elicit better things from the imagination than spontaneity. "Waking Early", though familiar in subject and title, is characteristic—

Already the first touch
Is mirrors, windows—
Outside, a dark tree
Spreads on our quilt of panes.
It waves like Ophelia. . . .

Much of his work is too domestic for my satisfaction. And like Patricia Beer he is, with one or two exceptions, committed to not more than the perceptions he wants to get into poems. One poem is made simply so that he can say "I like harmoniums." What he does best is delicacy.

[7] *A Partial Light*. By JOHN MOLE. J. M. Dent & Sons, £1.50.

AUTHORS

Dinah Brooke's novels include *Lord Jim at Home* (Barrie & Jenkins, 1973), and *The Miserable Child and her Father in the Desert* (André Deutsch, 1974). "Games of Love and War" is an extract from her novel of the same name, which Jonathan Cape will publish this spring.

C. David Heymann has been a Lecturer at Antioch College and at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. His biographical study, *Ezra Pound: The Last Rower*, in which these letters to Mussolini appear, is published by Viking Press, New York; Faber & Faber will bring out an English edition in the autumn.

Edward Lucie-Smith's *Movements in Art Since 1945* will shortly be published in a revised and augmented edition by Thames & Hudson. His art criticism in ENCOUNTER includes "The Purpose of Art History" (April 1975) and "Reading the Old Masters" (November 1974).

Richard Lowenthal is Professor of International Relations at the Free University in West Berlin, and currently Visiting Professor at the Research Institute on International Change, Columbia University. His most recent article in ENCOUNTER was a critique of the evolution and future of democracy in West Germany, "The Conservative Utopia" (June 1974).

Jan Morris's third volume of collected travel essays, *Travels*, will be published this month by Faber & Faber.

John Mackintosh was Professor of Politics at the University of Strathclyde from 1965–66, when he was elected Labour MP for Berwick and East Lothian. He lost his seat by 60 votes in the February 1974 general election, but was returned to Parliament again in October 1974. Among his books are *The British Cabinet* (1972), *British Government and Politics* (Hutchinson, 1970) and *The Devolution of Power* (1968). His article "How Much Time Left for Parliamentary Democracy?" appeared in the August 1974 issue of ENCOUNTER.

Max Beloff was Gladstone Professor of Government and Public Administration, Oxford University, from 1957–74; he is now Principal of the University College at Buckingham.

Henry Miller is Vice-Chancellor of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, where he was previously Dean of Medicine and Professor of Neurology. Among his books is *Medicine & Society* (Oxford University Press, 1973).

James Price was until recently a director of Penguin Books; his film criticism has appeared in the *London Magazine* and *The Listener*.

Douglas Dunn reviews poetry regularly for ENCOUNTER. His third volume of poems, *Love or Nothing*, was published by Faber in 1974, and he is the editor of a critical anthology, *Two Decades of Irish Writing* (Carcanet Press, 1975).

J. L. Talmon is Professor of Modern History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Among his distinguished contributions to the history of ideas are *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* (1952) and *Political Messianism* (1960); his study *Israel Among the Nations* was published by Weidenfeld in 1970.

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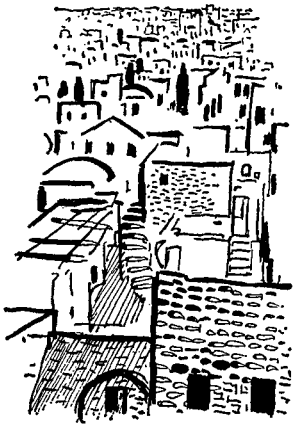
POINTS OF THE COMPASS

Letter from Israel

Reflections of an Historian in Jerusalem

By J. L. Talmon



IDEOLOGICAL history creates its own nemesis. It is born out of a deep craving for salvationist certainty and finality, for a total answer to all riddles and ills. When hopes fail and saviours are shown to be idols with feet of clay, nations, movements, parties are plunged into desperate confusion; they feel let down and deceived, become ashamed of their credulity, doubtful of their own judgment and horrified by yesterday's enthusiasms. A crisis of identity sets in. Men find it impossible to come to terms with their immediate national past and their own self-image.

Hardly a nation has been spared such a crisis in our own day. Germany has its Hitler to live down and all those traditions, aspirations, values, images, and symbols in German history which paved the way for the Führer. Present-day Italy is haunted by the twenty years of Fascism. France has difficulty in shaking off the nightmares of 1940 and Vichy. Less than forty years after having buried the Tsarist past and all its works, and twenty-five years after almost the total leadership of the October Revolution had been tried, sentenced and executed as criminal traitors, the Russians (and with them the world-wide Communist movement) were suddenly told that for a whole crucial generation of untold suffering they were ruled not by the iron laws of scientific socialism, but by a paranoiac tyrant. The East European nations, which gained their independence at the end of World War I and in the short inter-War period were intoxicated with nationalist exaltation, have now to abjure their national, largely anti-Russian myths and to resort to all kinds of mental acrobatics to recast their history.

Even countries which like Britain and the United States have not suffered violent revolution have had their self-image, national myths and self-assurance deeply shaken in this generation. Britain has—in the unkind words of the late Dean Acheson—lost an Empire, and has not yet found a role. An Anglophile foreign historian recently confided his present difficulty in teaching English history—he had been so used to extol the British genius for government by consent, the continuity and excellence of British institutions, and the peculiar British combination of freedom, cohesion, and efficiency. The United States has still to recover from the traumatic shocks of Viet Nam and Watergate.

One wonders how much of the anarchic spirit animating the rebellious students and the various radical and terrorist groups—and to what extent the present revival of anarchist ideology—is due to the passionate, contemptuous urge to kick fallen idols, to tear up sham and mask, to punish hypocrisy and destroy all establishments, with all their claims, pretence, decorum and sacred cows, their *arcana imperii*.

IN ONE OF HIS more purple passages, Joseph de Maistre writes of

> "that nation of five or six million perched on the bare rocks of Judea, the proudest of cities in Proud Asia, which resists all shocks which would have pulverised a nation ten times more numerous, braves the torrents of centuries, the sword of conquerors and the hatred of peoples, astonishes by its resistance the masters of the world, survives finally all the conquering nations and shows still after forty centuries its deplorable remnants to the eyes of the surprised observer."

In the middle of the 18th century the eminent Rabbi of Prague, R. Ezekiel Landau, defined the unwritten contract between the Jews and their Christian neighbours by stating that "taxes are our rent for being permitted to live amongst [the nations]. . . . They have possession of the land, and we are only sojourners. . . ." The older contemporary of Landau, Rabbi Johanan Eibeschuetz of Metz, reprimanded his congregation for engaging in "worldly vanities, idle talk, stories about wars", gaping at passing musketeers and pikemen. "These things befit rulers and their underlings." Jews should mourn the destruction of Jerusalem and recall the calamities which befell their ancestors in the days of Nebuchadnezzar and Titus.

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The world was soon to witness the beginning of a terrific nuclear explosion—to borrow an expression of Lewis Namier in another context—of long bottled-up human energies of an intense and purposeful race. The fission resulted from the violent contradiction between an immemorial, hermetically closed tradition and a sudden irresistible leap into a world of constant change, of ever-precipitated motion, all the time advancing towards unity and at the same time tormented and torn by fissiparous pulls.

In a number of countries, the Jews became both the leaven and the pioneers in the phenomenal conquests of capitalism and also the inspirers and leaders of revolutionary commotions. They stormed their way into the sciences and arts, from which they had till then kept clear and for which they had for so long been thought to possess no aptitude. At the end of a century-and-a-half, they suffered the most horrible blood-letting that a people has ever suffered from the hands of a world power bent on the conquest of the globe; as part of that campaign a crusade was proclaimed against the Jewish invasion. It absorbed and funnelled in the process all the old prejudices and all the modern ill-will against Jews into a murderous machine. In their desperate effort to withdraw from the storms of history into a safe refuge, it soon seemed to the Jews that the focus of international conflict had been transferred with them into that would-be retreat.

AS IF TO MAKE UP for centuries of despised and persecuted sectarian existence, the most theocratic of communities gave birth to the most effective of the revolutionary and atheistic transformers of man's consciousness in modern times—Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud. The most clannish of peoples produced such fierce practitioners of revolutionary internationalism as Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, and Leon Trotsky, as well as some of the most restless and enterprising promoters of international communications, agencies and media. As if in defiance of Rabbi Tam's dictum that "anything new is forbidden by the Torah", Jews have, in the last two centuries, been in the forefront of every *avant-garde*, pioneers in every new experiment, novel fashion and indeed craze, from psychoanalysis and nuclear research to hippyism. In the West where a liberal atmosphere offered their small communities considerable facilities, Jews eagerly embraced the ideas of individualism, society based upon contract, social mobility, *carrière ouverte aux talents*, in brief the type of liberalism which denies relevance to ancestry, blood, tribal and national traditions, religious allegiance.

In their desire to become integrated into the society around them, many Jews, such as Karl Marx's father and Heinrich Heine, embraced Christianity, if only nominally. Those who, with all their striving for equality and admission, were held back from baptism by too deep or psychologically too compulsive an allegiance to Judaism, or were too honest and too proud to take the step without conviction, reinterpreted Judaism as a message of the brotherhood of all men born in the image of the One God, Father of all, and depicted the role of Jews in history as that of carriers of the prophetic ideals of social justice, charity, and eternal peace. They went to great lengths to reform the prayerbook and liturgy, to cleanse them of references to beliefs and practices which were held not to be in conformity with the "spirit of progress", such as references to animal sacrifices or to the exclusiveness of the Jewish nation and to the dream of the return to Zion. The Jewish religion was made into a humanitarian, ethical, and as abstractly universal a creed as possible; and the Jews were enjoined to become model citizens of a liberal, tolerant and benevolent modern state.

MOSES MENDELSSOHN, friend of Kant, rationalist but strict observer of the Law, described the Jewish religion as embodying figuratively all the essentials of natural law and the commands of natural morality, with the severe ritualistic commandments obligating Jews alone—in order to train them for their universal mission in an especially strenuous discipline. Under the influence of Romanticism, Mendelssohn's successors in the field of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* devoted themselves to painstaking scholarly study of the Jewish religious tradition. They were motivated by the conscious or unconscious wish to depict by comparative method how the Jewish tradition grew out of a collective psyche and peculiar circumstances in the same way as the Christian denominations; and to reject the disparaging descriptions of Judaism as a tissue of absurdities and superstitions, peculiar to a fanatical, solitary sect.

The immersion in the ancient sources brought Heinrich Graetz, the greatest modern Jewish historian, close to a Romantic conception of the Jews as not merely a religious community, but as a *Volk*. He thereby caused much displeasure to many of his contemporaries, Jews and non-Jews. The violently nationalistic and anti-Semitic Treitschke was roused to put to the Jews the sharp alternative of either becoming Germans in everything or—if they chose to consider themselves a *Volk*—to pack up and go to Palestine. In his pamphlet against Treitschke and in the defence of the Jews and their equality, Theodore

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Mommsen gently advised his "beloved Jewish pupils" to take the final step in their endeavour to identify themselves completely with German culture—the conversion to Christianity, at least for the sake of their children. It was their duty to free them from the tiresome and hurtful ambiguities which they themselves had to endure.

IT WAS IN THE WASTES of windswept Lithuania, under the influence of the reawakening of the subject and history-less nationalities of Eastern and Central Europe and of the Hebrew translations of historical novels on the Hasmonean period written by German-Jewish authors, that Hebrew novelists such as Mapu and poets like J. L. Gordon (who called himself, very mistakenly, "the last bard of Judah") took up Biblical themes in an entirely new spirit. They dwelt with loving nostalgia on the splendours of the court of David and Solomon, the wars of Israel, the dramatic reigns of the Kings of Judea. This was heady wine to the oppressed and deprived Jewish masses in the miserable townlets in the backwaters of the Romanov and Habsburg Empires. Yet the greatest Jewish historian after Graetz, Simon Dubnow, was not captivated by Biblical Romanticism. He wrote his voluminous history of the Jewish people in the spirit of the Nationalities ideology which at that time was espoused by radicals of the dominant as well as of the subject races in that part of Europe. The Nationalities doctrine taught that a country belonged to the ethnic and cultural groups which inhabited it, and not to any dominant nationality. The significant components of a multi-national Empire were not atomised individuals, but these ethnic and cultural groups, *i.e.* the nationalities living on its territory. The Jews were one of them, equal to every other, and not a "guest people" soliciting tolerance from a "host nation." Like every other ethnic group, they were entitled to linguistic, cultural, educational and communal autonomy, and to financial help from the State to maintain their institutions. In fact, the Austro-Marxist theory of Otto Bauer and Karl Renner about personal and cultural autonomy of each ethnic group, which was to embrace all its members wherever they might be dispersed, recalled the Jewish *kehillah*: the ancient communal self-government, which the Jews would set up and get recognised as soon as they settled in a country, and jealously guard, even when they had forsaken their distinct tongue, Hebrew, Aramaic or later Yiddish, and retained little of their peculiar folkways.

Dubnow applied this criterion to the whole of post-Exile Jewish history, and he remained a secular non-Zionist Jewish nationalist to the day of his martyrdom at the hands of the Nazis in Latvia as a very old man. He was a tragic witness to the dismal failure of his seemingly only too rational conviction that having lived for well over a thousand (nay, nearer to two thousand) years in Europe, having spun their tradition and buried their dead in its lands, the Jews had every right to be regarded as natives and as a part of the civilised landscape.

ZIONISM COMBINED most of the features of the two most potent and the most history-minded of modern ideologies—Nationalism and Socialism. It harked back to a glorious, distant past. It strove to restore those glories of old by a revolutionary act of self-emancipation from the miseries and indignities of an evil present and by rebuilding from scratch a free and independent existence in the original home. It thus lovingly reaffirmed one part of history and passionately rejected another part of it.

The Socialist aspect was present not only in the resolve to establish a society that would be a model of rational planning and social justice. It was to be found also in the bitter, on occasion almost anti-Semitic critique of the Jewish role in the European economy throughout the ages, in the condemnation—sometimes with scant regard to objective historic causes and circumstances—of the allegedly Jewish penchant for the unproductive, demeaning, and demoralising occupations of money-lender, middleman, tradesman, and in the Tolstoyan and Russian Social Revolutionary apotheosis of labour, toil, rustic pursuits, closeness to nature as healthy and morally superior. A normal social structure, a society of toilers and peasants, a new civilisation and morality that would revolutionise Jewish existence —these became the battle cries of Labour Zionism. A strictly Marxist gloss was added by the emphasis upon the need for a normal and healthy class war unhampered by the irritant of anti-Semitism which interfered with the preordained class struggle both of Jews and non-Jews.

The vision of the breakdown of capitalism and of the violent revolutionary confrontation between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat had its parallel in the haunting fear of Zionists or—with the more daring, or more fanatical, spirits—the expectation of some apocalyptic crisis which would engulf Jewish life under the blows of mounting mass anti-Semitism. There were, long before Hitler, voices warning of the coming of a St Bartholomew's Night which would send the Jews fleeing from Eastern Europe to Palestine.

UNDER THE IMPACT OF Nazism some Zionist historians were driven to lay down a kind of law

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that precisely in the places where the assimilation of Jews had gone farthest and Jews had achieved the highest measure of culture, wealth, and influence, there was no escape from ultimate catastrophe: Alexandria, Spain, Germany. Needless to say, such views were bitterly fought by assimilated liberals who accused Zionists of "defeatism" and of offering a rationale for anti-Semitism. Socialists condemned them for creating "bogeys" and fostering "chauvinism", and for deserting the general battlefield by giving in to black reaction and diverting the attention of the Jewish masses from the general struggle on behalf of a revolutionary ideology.

Zionist historiography glorified the Messianic movements in Jewish history. Where older historiography saw only delusion, downright deceit or mass psychosis, Zionists lovingly sought hints and signs of a national ideology, of emancipatory aspirations, and links in a perennial undying tradition: the dream of the Return to Zion. Similarly—and not uninfluenced by modern psychology, especially Jung and the contemporary preoccupation with symbolic and mythological aspects of culture—Kabbalah and Jewish mysticism (which had received short shrift from liberals and rationalists as the raving and ranting of diseased minds) came to be seen as the esoteric language of a repressed, rebellious tradition and of powerful life forces which were straining to break out of the harsh discipline of rabbinical scholasticism, and had a liberating impact on their practitioners by preparing them for emancipation from their sectarian mentality. Similarly, too, Hassidism with its overflowing emotionalism and pantheism was treated with affectionate approval as an expression of vitality and a manifestation of a people's peculiar genius.

THE SIX DAY WAR had the electrifying effect of making all Jewish history up to date look like one long preparation for the phenomenal victory. Biblical descriptions of the conquests of Joshua, the battles of David, the victories of the Maccabees, all acquired a vivid reality. It was hardly possible not to feel a tremor of awe at the way in which the promises given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the prophecies of the seers, appeared to have come true, with Israel having miraculously come into its full and undivided inheritance and, at long last—it was confidently hoped—security. Tiny Israel seemed to have emerged as the strongest military power over a large area comprising three continents, and as one of the few countries in the contemporary jaded world with a sense of purpose and overflowing with self-assurance. What a miraculous change after Auschwitz!

The greater was the shock of the Yom Kippur War in 1973. It was not only that the unthinkable looked for a few days possible: the abyss was wide open. Israel was made to feel the cold wind of isolation, when country after country cut off relations, as if to add insult to injury. The loneliness was in due course intensified, when a succession of international forums began to treat Israel as an outlaw and pariah nation. The fondest hope of Zionism—to revolutionise Jewish existence by securing equal and recognised status as a Nation among Nations in the Family of Nations—was being systematically shattered. It was an old story all over again: the nation that dwelleth alone. . . . The State of Israel seemed to have become the collective Jew of the ghetto, whose very right to exist was questioned, whose claims to equal treatment were not taken for granted, who was held to have to earn his right to exist by special exertions, by some special atonement, through being better than others. Of all the nations which defended their vital interests against majorisation by UN bloc voting, Israel alone was being bullied to forgo them. Of all the States from which refugees had fled, Israel was the only one to feel the brunt of relentless pressure to take them back. Overnight would-be-imperialist Israel was reduced to beggary, while mortal enemies, pledged to destroy the Jewish State, had surfaced from being objects of pity into the position of the bankers of the world. Theirs was now a power which could hold the planet to ransom and extort exorbitant pay for the life-blood of its economy, and make the proudest nations court its favour.

VAST HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS partly unconnected with Jews, on the one hand, and tragic ironies besetting Jewish fate in this century on the other, combined to create an entirely new setting for Jewish history, and yet to push it back upon the old paths. The re-emergence of the old-new races of China and India and of the extra-European and non-Christian States all over Asia and Africa brought into the councils of mankind civilisations which had never known anti-Semitism, never persecuted Jews, never been obsessed with "the Jew." They were free of the morbid oedipal complex of Christianity towards the Jew—the parent of its religion, yet murderer of its Saviour. They had never been haunted by the image of Judas Iscariot, nor did the word Jew conjure up to them the figure of Shylock.

But their record was empty of Jews. And without the knowledge of the Bible and familiarity with the sad story of the centuries-old tension and conflict between Church and Synagogue, between persecutors and persecuted, no wonder they were entirely deaf to the sound of the magic names of

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Zion and Jerusalem, to the myth of Zionism. They lacked any sense of guilt, unease or obligation towards the Jews or appreciation of their unique fate and contribution. To them the Arab version of Zionism—as an imperialistic venture overrunning an Arab land on the morrow of the exodus of the white man from all over Asia and Africa—sounded plausible, especially when national interest (or the Moslem religion) drew them closer to the rich Arab world. Moreover, Israel stood condemned as "the satellite of the United States."

TO MANY JEWS it looked like an act of Providence that, on the eve of the destruction of the millennial Jewish civilisation in Europe, there should have come into being in the most powerful country in the world the most powerful Jewish diaspora of all time—and that the government of that power should not only be in need of the Jewish votes and financial backing, but also be saturated in Biblical lore, suffer from a sense of shame at not having opened its gates to Jews escaping from mass murder, share very tangible interests with Israel, and admire its prowess and dynamism.

This became a scandal in the eyes of the Left. The Left had no mind for memories of Auschwitz when passionately preoccupied with the favourite historical schema of Imperialism on one side and colonial oppressed nations aspiring to freedom and progress on the other (even if that version was occasionally tarnished by Soviet strategic and imperialist interests). The reversal of alliances was a heartrending development to a good many Jews and Israelis who had so firmly believed in the natural alliance between Jews and the Left (and all progressive forces). Few could bring themselves to believe in the possibility of a genuine and lasting understanding with the Right, whose views, temper, mentality and past prevented genuinely friendly feelings towards Jews from striking root.

THE ONLY DEPENDABLE ALLY of Israel was the Jews of the diaspora. And they were deeply shaken and bewildered by what to some seemed a terrible change in the position of Israel, from the carrier of the banner of world Jewry and its proud shield into a heavy and possibly permanent burden. At the same time, they realised that they just could not evade their responsibility for Israel. What enemies decried as an international conspiracy was nothing but the closing of ranks of a sorely tried people, with long memories and reflex reactions in face of danger. The destruction of Israel was sure to deal a mortal blow to corporate Jewish existence all over the world, and a catastrophe that might overtake US Jewry was certain to doom the State of Israel.

THIS IS, IN MY VIEW, the background for the emergence of the Masada complex, or the complex of Samson, in the days after the October War. The Masada complex is indeed a striking example of the vicissitudes of historical consciousness, of the fortunes of a historic myth, and the changes in the self-image of a nation. As is now universally known (partly thanks to Professor Yigael Yadin's celebrated excavations on the rock), the last remaining group of Zealots to escape death and captivity at the hands of the Romans refused to lay down arms, and entrenched themselves on the precipitous craggy mountain of Masada in the Judean desert. With certain defeat staring into their faces, they preferred self-immolation to falling into the grasp of a heathen enemy. The men slaughtered their women and children, and then committed mass suicide. The only source to teach us of the event is the tale in Josephus, the Jewish general who despaired of victory, went over to the Romans, and then wrote his famous history of the Jewish War. The speech of the Masada leader before the act of suicide (as recorded by Josephus) is, like other speeches in ancient historiography, an exercise in rhetoric. It is, strangely enough, couched in terms and abounds in images which are wholly alien to Jewish tradition. It extols the love of freedom and honour and the beauty of heroic death. Apart from very general digressions about divine choice and gentile enmity, it contains no references to Jewish law, lore, writings, or beliefs. What is no less astonishing is that—as one young Israeli historian, Benjamin Kedar, has recently pointed out—no Jewish source (Mishna or Talmud or any later sage or scribe) makes reference to the macabre episode or to Josephus's account of it, except for a mention in Josiphon, a 10th-century compilation. The event found no echo in Jewish writings or consciousness till 1927, when under the impact of the pogroms in the Ukraine, following the Bolshevik Revolution, the Hebrew poet, Itzhak Lamdan, wrote a very powerful epic poem of which the key sentence is:

"Masada shall not fall again. . . ."

IN CONTRAST TO the total oblivion into which the tragedy of Masada had fallen, generations of Jews have ever since been brought up on the story of Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai. The Rabbi was a most distinguished spiritual leader in Jerusalem. Realising that the fall of the holy city was imminent, he asked his disciples to smuggle him out of the beleaguered capital, as a corpse on a bier, so as to deceive the Zealots. Upon reaching

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the Roman lines, he asked to be taken to the Commander. Granted an audience, he begged the Roman general to allow him and his pupils to proceed to the little town of Yavneh, south of Jerusalem, and to establish an Academy there. The request granted, Yavneh in due course became the most important seat of learning in Palestine. The legend of Yavneh was handed down from generation to generation as symbolising the metamorphosis from political statehood to spiritual confraternity. It was an example of the survival of the soul after the death of the body (the corpse!), and as proof of the eternity of Judaism which, as an idea, was more immune to destruction and more authentically Jewish than earthly institutions and power. Paradoxically, it was left to some of our contemporaries in Israel (among them one aged historian, whose life style and achievements qualify him much more to be a follower of the Rabbi than of the Zealot leader), to condemn Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai for acting like a "Fifth Columnist" and cowardly breaking the solidarity of his embattled people.

No less remarkable is, of course, the hostile attitude of the rabbinical tradition to the Bar-Kochba uprising against the Romans in the second century. The leader of the uprising is in some references called Bar-Koziba (son of the lie), notwithstanding the fact that he was supported by one of the greatest Rabbis of the age, Akiva, who perished in the memorable execution of the ten martyred sages.

Similarly, the feast of Channukah has no record in the Old Testament, nor has the Book of Maccabees of the Christian Apocrypha been included in the Jewish canon, and its Hebrew and Aramaic originals have been lost. The religious zeal of the first Maccabees in fighting idolatry was dimmed in the eyes of the Rabbis by the Hellenistic culture of their Hasmonean descendants; and the feast of Channukah, celebrated in modern times as a commemoration of a war of national liberation, was treated by the Rabbis as a feast of the miracle of the lights.

That the Rabbis did not have it all their own way, and that there was another tradition which suffered suppression, is shown by the fact that, when the Patriarch Judah I tried to abolish the fast of the Ninth of Ab (because the occasion was used by agitators to incite the people against Rome), he was resisted and overruled.

MASADA HAS NOW BECOME the place of pious and patriotic pilgrimage. The bones of the fighters and their families have been exhumed and given a State funeral. Units of the Army are taken there for the swearing-in ceremony. Few pause to reflect that the almost Wagnerian fascination with death and suicide is utterly non-Jewish. Judaism glorifies life and survival above all. Little thought is given to the fact that Masada was never accepted by past generations as a way of living or dying, and that, at bottom, the cult of Masada could become a morbidly defeatist preoccupation. Instead of inspiring courage, a will to fight, a faith in victory, the sepulchral myth may lure men to death by fostering the conviction of an inevitable end. It may become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The examples of the Poles, the Irish, and other defeated fate-ridden but rebellious nations is enough to show what a magnetic impact defeat, and its associated images of heroic death, may exercise. The sober historian can hardly help treating the three great Polish uprisings—of Kosciuszko in 1794, of 1830, and 1863—as anything but hopeless ventures from the start. They were hardly inevitable events, and their results were utterly disastrous. They sealed the fate of that unhappy nation for generations. Yet a fighting nation needs myths and legends, heroes and martyrs; and it cannot afford to treat them as lighthearted, excitable men who died in vain.

The bloody protest for a glorious thing,
They shall be spoken of among their people,
The generations shall remember them,
And call them blessed.

THE CRISIS OF IDENTITY in Israel is, thus, producing a far-reaching polarisation on the two extremes of the ideological spectrum. The crystallisation of a type of Integral Nationalism at one pole is being answered by a decline of Zionist faith and a scepticism verging on nihilism on the opposite side. The two extremes, with their lunatic fringes, represent small numerical minorities. But they are highly articulate figures of an activist temper confronting a perplexed public and are significant as symptoms and portents.

Anyone familiar with the French variety of "integral nationalism", or the Slavophile version of it, will be ready with a slogan for the Israeli phenomenon: the power of the dead over the living. The present generation, which has been singled out by Providence to liberate the fatherland in its historical boundaries—so runs its argument in the current all-important grand debate on the future frontiers of Israel—has no right to renounce any part of the nation's patrimony. This is an organic whole and belongs to all generations, past, present and future. Just as every generation is subordinated to the perennial imperatives, values, and aspirations of the immortal nation, so is the individual to the totality, to its interests and aims.

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What, then, is that authentic legacy of a history of 3,500 years, spun over several continents, influenced by such a variety of civilisations, and affected by such a multitude of factors, situations, changes? The Orthodox militants have of course a *prima facie* unanswerable answer: the Jewish religion. Without paying any heed to the time dimension and to evolutionary change, they call "authentic" the unchanging Judaism literal fundamentalism as it was practised in the ages of an utterly apolitical, sectarian, and ritualistic seclusion in Eastern Europe, many centuries after the canon had been codified in the Middle East in very different circumstances. This they combine with persistent evocation of the eternal enmity of the Amalekites and the Edomites and the persecution suffered through the ages.

The tribal ingredients of Judaism of the Bronze Age are overstated at the expense of the later strictly religious, metaphysical, humanist, and universal elements. Resentments and consolations, and dreams of revenge—hopes of deliverance impotently nursed for centuries in eschatological visions on the far margin of society—all are now summoned in connection with political programmes, territorial claims, resort to arms and coercive procedures. Politicised and militantly nationalist Orthodoxy is courted by the devotees of secular integral nationalism who set great store by anything that deepens national self-awareness and intensifies the sense of destiny. Religious myths and symbols are to them part of a sacred national tradition, the expression of the nation's genius, and thus objects of adoration. They welcome, above all, the passionate motivation that activates the nationalist wing of Orthodoxy. The emphasis upon the absolute and transcendental sanction of political aspirations appears as an infusion of ardour and self-assurance.

Few of the political nationalists are strict in their observances. Still fewer would wish to be pressed to render account of their religious beliefs. The integral nationalists of Israel may be compared to Maurice Barrès and Charles Maurras who were not interested in the authenticity of the stories of the Gospel or in the logic of the religious canon. In fact, they disbelieved all of them. But they admired the hierarchical discipline maintained by the Catholic Church. They saw in authority from above the secret of social cohesion and national grandeur, and in the Catholic past of France a vital part of its historic personality.

ISRAELIS AT THE OPPOSITE POLE are deeply worried by the spread of a mood which has elsewhere invariably overflowed with violent anti-Semitic accents. The theories which offered it a rationale treated the Jews as an "alien" body which the national organism must reject, since the Jews had no share in the national heritage, and were incapable of entering into its spirit. The addiction of Jewish intellectuals to analytical scepticism—their ironical attitude to collective myths and symbols, their tireless questioning of all accepted beliefs, their association with cosmopolitan ideologies such as liberalism, socialism, and pacifism—made them appear a dangerous solvent.

Liberal or Left-wing Israelis, as well as the religious elements of purer spirituality in the Kibbutz and University, are dismayed by the spread of mythological patterns of thought and behaviour, the rhetoric of a holy war at a time when the enemy is playing with the equally dangerous slogan of *jihad*, and by a mystical nationalism which threatens to breed collective solipsism and to foster an authoritarian temper. Not a few secularists are swept on into positions quite beyond the defence of freedom of choice and individual rights, and in some cases into conflict with basic tenets of liberal Zionism itself. They are being thrown back into what Friedrich Meinecke called *Weltbürgertum*: a pre-political cosmopolitanism, and an abstract natural-rights moralism. They become sceptical about the reality of collective entities staking out juridical and political claims. They develop a deep sense of guilt towards the Palestinian Arabs. In their irritability a few go so far as to lose sight of the tragedy of the clash between rights. They torment themselves by obsessively dwelling on the phenomenon of Palestinian Arab Zionism, and taunt the Zealots of Israel with the name of "Jewish Fascists." Each side provokes the other to go much further than it originally intended.

NOTWITHSTANDING SOME NOISY demonstrations, neither the religious nor the secular integral nationalists have so far given cause to suspect their allegiance to parliamentary democracy and to the rule of law. But the appeal to a superior, impersonal, eternal sanction against the vagaries of mortal men conjures up both the image of an élite claiming to represent and embody the only authentic form of Judaism and of activists usurping the right to take coercive action to impose their ideas on the unruly and the faithless. Fears of such a development are inevitably aroused by the implication of the passionate resolve of both the national-religious Zealots and the believers in integral nationalism to annex territories inhabited by an alien, unwilling, and hostile Arab population in the name of a transcendental right and sanction.

Horrified and incensed by what seems to them nihilistic and treasonable undermining of the nation's morale at the moment of its supreme

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test, the nationalists utter menacing hints about the characterless and poisonous enemy within, possessed by a death wish and too demoralised to feel the unquestioned obviousness of the national interest and imperative, but perplexed by the case of the implacable enemy. Are there any Arabs—they ask—who give the slightest thought to the Jewish case? Are there any who feel any respect for the Jewish phenomenon or have any understanding for Zionist motivation?

THE DEEP CAUSE OF THIS POLARISATION which is calculated to determine the very shape of Israeli society and Jewish mentality for a long time, goes back much further than the Six Day War or even the Yom Kippur War. We are, again, at Auschwitz. Among the six million Jews who perished in the ghettos and death camps of Eastern Europe there were at least two million potential citizens of Israel, who represented the best of Jewish manhood and had a total commitment to the Zionist idea and to liberal democracy at the same time. The State came into being too late for them.

And there was no substitute for them. The Oriental Jews who were hastily brought into nascent Israel, admirable as their qualities and potentialities otherwise are, not only lacked the modern skills and techniques, but came from an environment which did not foster dedication to abstract causes and did not encourage a spirit of self-reliance and voluntary cooperation with others.

There is another fact of immense importance. The deepest motive force of Zionism and its strongest justification in the eyes of world opinion was originally the Jewish plight, the sufferings of homeless millions. The "final solution" has removed from the world press not only news about pogroms and persecutions but, indeed, the very expression which in bygone days was never absent from public debate—"The Jewish Question." The desperate Jewish need gave to the Zionists their irresistible courage and determination to disregard Arab opposition, their ardent faith in the rightness of their cause and their conviction of its utter urgency. Not only has the "Jewish Question" by the most tragic of ironies ceased to haunt the world; most Gentiles have, in the meantime, become used to the image of the well-to-do, established, and influential Jewish communities in the West; and they are not much affected by Soviet policies on Jewish emigration or towards the Jews in the USSR.

Zionist philosophy and apologetics have, as a result, been more and more driven to resort to argument from history, from historical rights and divine promise, on top, of course, of the insistence on the needs of Israel's security and the danger of annihilation facing it. The ear of world opinion—especially in the Third World and in the Communist bloc—is not exactly attuned to the argument from historical rights.

Not a few Israelis have grown more and more confirmed in their farouche, not to say paranoiac and solipsist obsession with their own righteousness and with the old implacable and immutable hostility of the Gentile world. Mystical nationalism offers itself in these circumstances as a narcotic and a shield against confusing circumstances, inner uncertainty, and the bad will of an uncomprehending wicked world.

OWING TO THE FACT that for centuries they formed there the only middle class, the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe constituted (before 1939) not merely a religion and an ethnic group, but a variegated and vital civilisation. Religious distinctness may have been its root; but in modern times it became one facet of Jewish life among others, to some of overriding importance, to others of only marginal significance, or almost irrelevant. There was a separate language, a rich Jewish culture, a flourishing literature, a wealth of traditions, customs, habits, a network of autonomous institutions, a particular economy and social structure, and a proliferation of ideologies and parties. With the tragic, sudden disappearance of that civilisation, the Israeli leaders woke up to the fact that in this secular age and in face of the growing atomisation and assimilation of the Jews in the Western countries, the only remaining focus of Jewish cohesion was the synagogue.

They were seized by a frantic anxiety that liberal legislation on such matters as for instance, civil marriage, was calculated to lower the barriers and expose the unity and the very survival of Jewry to mortal danger. Israel must not show a bad example and make it easier for young Jewish men and women to "drop out." Hence the irksome restrictions in such matters as civil status, Sabbath observance, dietary laws which often cause inconvenience to many, intense misery to some, and wide-spread indignation. Yet these restrictions are despairingly defended by politicians who are by no means ordinary opportunists and who, in their younger days, had sometimes been militant anti-clericals and even now do not themselves observe any ritualistic precepts. Only they do not stop to reflect whether, instead of preventing backsliding (which they fear so much), illiberalism may not rather foster it among those Western Jews whose attachment to liberal values and modes of life is very deep and who in fact owe their welfare and remarkable success to them.

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THE MOST HISTORY-RIDDEN and history-obsessed people thus finds itself torn between solipsistic self-apotheosis, which comes from an idolisation of history, and the self-rejection which is the result of a denial of the past. Although it is certain that a reasonable settlement of the Middle Eastern conflict will stem the drift to the extremes, the question of Israeli (and indeed Jewish) identity, which has become so acute in the middle of the fourth millennium of Jewish history, will remain an open and tormenting issue. Nor is there any prospect that Jewish anxiety about Jewish survival, ceaselessly threatened from outside and undermined from within, is going to be stilled by a Messianic solution. Too great a charge put on History by appointing it to the role of saviour carries with it its own nemesis.

Camping Provençal

Camping Provençal. Notices: (1)
Tourists may only settle in the camp,
after if having checked in at the office
to know their places. (2) The campers' dresses
must be correct in camp. (3) Please no noise
between the 22 and seven-o-clock.
(4) In the camp, parents must watch across
their children. (5) Take care of the plantations,
don't set up nails nor pour dish-water on
the trees. (6) Fire-woods are forbidden. (7)
Linen must dry discretely. (8) Detritus,
put this into the dustbins. (9) Showers-bath,
wash-house and W.C. must be kept clean.
Water is quite uncommon in Provence.
(10) Management is NOT responsible
for thefts. (11) Speed don't exceed 5.
(12) *That* box is reserved alone for throw
sanitary-towels and periodicals.
(13) These rules must be respected under
penalty of your time expiring here.

Peter Reading

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LETTERS

Beatrice Webb & Whitechapel

IF ALL Max Geltman's information, as set out in a short article printed in your March issue, is as inaccurate as that which relates to Beatrice Webb, his targets have very little to fear from him.

He accuses Beatrice Webb of exceptionally virulent anti-Semitism. He gives no quotation in support of this statement (which anyone with personal knowledge of Beatrice Webb would know to be rubbish); but he refers generally to her "finding much virtue to the Soviet constitution under Stalin" and "nothing but a lust for greedy profit among the Jews of Whitechapel."

I should point out that on the first count the Soviet Constitution says nothing about anti-Semitism; and Mr Geltman must surely know that a large number of people of Radical disposition (including an American ambassador) welcomed the constitution, and did not realise, in the mid-thirties, how fiercely Stalin was beginning to interpret it against his enemies of every kind.

The second indictment must relate to a much earlier period, when Beatrice Potter (not then married) was engaged on investigations for Charles Booth's study of *London Life and Labour*, and preparing to give evidence to the Commission on Sweating. In her Diary, and in her book *My Apprenticeship*, Beatrice wrote down what she saw. It was, and is, common knowledge that there was much "sweating" in the industries of the East End, and that *some* of the sweating employers were Jewish. Beatrice noticed this fact; but she also observed that the Jewish employees tended to accept very low wages rather than be out of work. This policy may be criticised on various grounds; but it certainly does not indicate a lust for greedy profits! Mr Geltman should read what Beatrice Webb actually wrote.

MARGARET COLE

London

Home on the Barricades

FERDINAND MOUNT's analysis of the writer as revolutionary [ENCOUNTER, November 1975] can be taken as a fine example of functionalism in the social sciences. However, it suffers from the very defect that Clifford Geertz has found in much of the functional analysis:

> "A pattern of behaviour shaped by a certain set of forces turns out, by a plausible but nevertheless mysterious coincidence, to serve ends but tenuously related to those forces. . . ."

Granted that the writer's new independence has led to a flight from openness—here one recalls Erich Fromm's *Fear of Freedom*—the question that remains is: *why* should he have looked for a home at the barricades? Is the author prepared to argue that it is *only there* that the warmth of the hearth can be found in the modern society? If not, then the author must argue why it is that *revolutionism* has been chosen as a substitute for aristocratic patronage. One wonders if a full understanding of the problem can be gained without a class analysis of the modern writer and a cultural analysis of the modern society.

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ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE provides possibilities not imperatives. The modern writer's relative freedom from material constraints is merely the factor which *permits* the transformation of a critical stance (which the writer always has to maintain towards society) into an adversarial stance. I did not say that modern writers could find warmth *only* at the barricades, still less that all or even the best of them have. But it is not in the least a "mysterious coincidence" that some at least should have done so. Chen-Tung Chang is right in saying that more analysis is needed to explain exactly why they do. The essential point, though, is surely clear enough. To be out in the fresh air is also to be out in the cold, and revolution offers a tempting focus, a glowing brazier on a dark night.

FERDINAND MOUNT

London

Fairlie in America

HENRY FAIRLIE's wandering thesis on the degeneration of his homeland and the upgrading of his adopted land is typical of people who depart for other shores, hopeful of success. To justify resettlement and help the shekels roll in they must first pass muster by wooing the natives' vanity, *e.g.* "Why I like living in America", while at the same time writing off their homeland with venom, denigrating its very soul and betraying their kinsmen. A show-business writer now living in Cork did exactly the same sort of thing a month or two ago, and there are many more.

Fairlie is described by ENCOUNTER as a political writer but "Thoughts of Home at Midnight" (January) appears to have little to do with politics, or has it? He is a yesterday man to the few who remember him on this side of the Atlantic. We gather that he has lived in America now for some time and it is strange, therefore, that he has not yet mastered the basic skills of American English, the "lingua franca of the world" which he so greatly admires. Nor has he fully grasped the real heart of the British people at this time, despite all his visitors who manage to track him down in the hill-billy clinkerland of Texas. He writes of the Irish problem as being one of class, presumably never having heard of Roman Catholics and Protestants; but of course he is the type that would always seek an ambiguous way out if challenged. One could go on, but this will have to do.

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Auden returned home from America to die, but he was well-known. Fairlie's final chapter may well be a Chesterton "return"—

down a rolling English road . . . just for a "cuppa" tea
the day he went to Giggleswick by way of Tennessee.

For there is good news yet to hear and fine things to be seen
Before we go to Paradise by way of Kensal Green.

SHEILA BURNS

Winsome, Peaks Hill
Purley, Surrey

Heisenberg's Science & the Occult

Mind over Matter?

WERNER HEISENBERG, who has just died, did the world a service—the latest of many—in the form of an article in ENCOUNTER (March 1975) presaging the end of science as we know it.

Now one crucial statement therein may at first sound abstruse, but in fact speaks wonders to us all:

> "What is really needed is a change in fundamental concepts. We will have to abandon the philosophy of Democritus and the concept of fundamental elementary particles. And, instead, we will have to accept the concept of fundamental symmetries which is a concept out of the philosophy of Plato."

Huge shapes can be seen to move and powers to stir. So the molecule is "out" as the key to reality! The sub-atomic particles have withheld their cosmic secrets, even under ruthless interrogation in the bubble-chambers! and we are back to Platonic thought, and therefore to the universe of Mind over molecule expounded by the greatest Neo-platonist of the modern world, William Blake. . . .

It was a question of time. Almost 40 years ago, Sir James Jeans voiced his famous revelation that "the universe begins to look more like a great thought than a great machine." And Sir Arthur Eddington told us that in the wake of Rutherford, Einstein, and Planck the poet's calculus must rank with the physicist's equation as a metaphor of objective reality. In 1931, the deliciously named "Principle of Uncertainty" won the Nobel prize for Dr Heisenberg who (in Arthur Koestler's words) "will probably go down in history as the man who put an end to causal determinism in physics—and thereby in philosophy." And at least as early as 1919, G. R. S. Mead of Cambridge suggested that science was already in a position to seriously reconsider the Neo-platonic, Hermetic, and Gnostic philosophies.

NOW THIS IS WHERE WE ENTER zones in which science is loath to tread. In this region of mind-energy we come upon Plotinus and Porphyry and those mystical illuminations once attributed to the god Thrice Blessed Hermes. Here one confronts "the subtle body" wherein man is defined as a manifestation of spirit about which the visible, molecular body is but a cohesive envelope. Here are the etheric and astral selves long known to any serious occultist but still anathema to the physical laboratory.

Then one looks further and sees that Neo-Platonism exerted an influence upon the Hebrew Holy Cabala during the middle ages. This superb, mystically induced system whose sigil is The Tree of Life describes a cosmic circuit of energy which links man and heaven as microcosm and macrocosm—"as above, so below"—wherein we are back to Blake, to Plato.

One can only touch here upon fields of endless study. The curriculum will have to be revised to include such men of genius as Giordano Bruno and Nicholas of Cusa who brought the ancient energy-cosmos to the humanistic 16th century in new and revivified form. In fact, the curriculum ought to change so radically, by force of logic, as to dissolve the barriers that separate science and the humanities.

Newton has long since ceded to Einstein; now Voltaire must be succeeded by Blake, and Freud by Jung. Not the least blessing, indeed, would be the passing of the paltry Freudian mousetrap-model of the mind in which the human genitalia reign at the centre of a scarcely existing cosmos. Instead, we can look to Jung who understood the nature of religion, who was richly gifted in the optic of symbolism and learned in alchemical philosophy, and who excelled in that quality of scientific perception so exalted by Blake—Imagination.

DR HEISENBERG SPOKE of the *fundamental symmetries* of Platonic doctrine. How strangely the symmetry of the DNA double-helix, the "genetic code", parallels the double serpent-helix of the ancient Caduceus, symbol of ordered life-energy and to this day the symbol of medical science. How strangely the closed carbon ring—which Kekulé *saw* after having dreamt of a serpent biting its tail—coincides with the ancient Ouroboros, the very same image symbolising a fundamental continuity of life—which chemists associate with carbon. The very coincidence is circular: symbols and serpents and cycles.

For all the recent advances in science would seem to be pointed in this direction: Dr Penfield's bio-rhythms; Dr Robinson's non-standard calculus; new evidence for the unified field theory; not to mention the fact that the *psi*-fields postulated to explain non-causal behaviour on the part of those sub-atomic particles paralleled the much older *psi*-fields of occult exploration. All these theories tend toward a sense of unity, of Oneness, which is the *summa* of the occult mind—embodied in the wheel of the Zodiac, the great Zero of the Tarot, the ring of fire in which Siva dances, the circle on the brow of Buddha, the inscribed energies of the mandala, and by the retina of the human eye—which Blake and Plato knew to be a creative eye and an integral factor of creation.

How very right Dr Heisenberg is when he remarks, "You see how extremely difficult it is to get away

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from an old tradition." But when he reckons that there will probably not be "any major break-through" and implies that science will find a way to escape this crushing philosophical conundrum and carry on as before, I must disagree.

CHECKMATE IS CHECKMATE, and science has lost its molecular, mechanical, existential king. And for those of us who "believe" in psychic power and the rectitude of the astrological map and the vibrations of spirit for no other reason than that of having *observed* them soberly, methodically, patently and empirically, *under scientific conditions appropriate to their study rather than under those predestined to exclude them in favour of a previously held scheme*, it will not do to accept the yawning *non sequitur* that while the most basic presumptions of science of the past 500 years must now be abandoned, and that while the mind-energies of Plato and Blake must now be officially restored, the magic number of our consciousness remains unchanged and the hegemony of science intact.

No; we are witnessing the restitution of ideas once mocked as being patently unscientific and of brilliantly objective studies once libelled as superstition. On this basis science may continue to perform its impressive if limited functions but can never again claim to be the sole arbiter of reality and perception. And the matter goes far beyond physics alone. For in the event that we survive the more lethal aspects of atomic research we shall need a whole new curriculum designed to accept and nurture those archetypal symmetries upon which art and the occult consciousness have been founded throughout time.

Dr Heisenberg is right to suggest that the nature of the answer received in any inquiry will be shaped by the nature of the question posed. Thus, was Shelley correct when he said that, "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world"? The questions must change radically. And for poets as for all other psychics the approval of Science has become superfluous and the age of apology is over.

PAUL WALDO-SCHWARTZ

London

Watson's "Left"

WHAT Mr George Watson offers in his article ["Was the New Left a Success?" ENCOUNTER, October] is not history but denunciation. To bracket the New Left with Stalinism means simply to employ demagogic rhetoric instead of sound analysis. Mr Watson quotes from *May Day Manifesto 1968*; he should have also quoted those parts in which the analysis presented there is in accordance with the findings of (certainly non-Marxist) sociologists like, for example, the professors Titmuss and Townsend (*e.g.* pp. 27–30 etc.), and those in which the socialist, *i.e.* humanist alternative is described (*e.g.* pp. 34–5 etc.). Moreover, in criticising the "sages of the New Left" for adhering to socialism (which, to Mr Watson, "is a Victorian doctrine"), he shows an acute lack of historical sensitivity. The "great" books of the New Left (written by Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggart, E. P. Thompson, Christopher Hill, E. J. Hobsbawm, amongst others), as I understand them, present the attempt to reconstruct the history of alternative models of society (which have justly or not—for reasons to be discussed—been passed by in the course of history), in order to find the starting-point for a realistic socialist *praxis* for the present.

And, dialectically (will I be forgiven for using this word?), this *human interest* to transform the existing social system of late capitalist society forms the epistemological basis and the political perspective of the New Left authors.

Additionally, there are many errors which to correct I would need much more space than I have here. Only two further points. Firstly, the sentence "The young copy: they do not invent" is simply wrong. If Mr Watson had cared to read (or leaf through) the volumes of, say, the *New Left Review* since 1970 he would have seen that for himself. If he had, moreover, had a look into the seminal paperback of the English students' movement *Student Power* (1969) he would have found that none of the contributors (except Marcuse) was (then) older than 31. And if he had cared to read a few issues of the (yearly) *Socialist Register* he would have found valuable material which might have corrected his, if I may say so, deplorably simplistic views.

Secondly, if he denounces the "sages" of the New Left as people who hold revolutionary views without practising them (or only to such an extent as not to endanger their social position), I would like to use this opportunity to thank Mr Raymond Williams publicly for what he did for the German student Rudi Dutschke (cf. *Cambridge Review*, January 29, 1971; pp. 94–5), who was expelled from Great Britain by the order of a politician who had to resign later for known reasons.

JÜRGEN KRAMER

University of Marburg
West Germany

Skinner Skinned?

IN HIS ARTICLE "Behaviourism, Pro & Contra" (July 1975) Professor H. J. Eysenck touches briefly on my criticism of B. F. Skinner's views (presented in my *The Pseudo-Science of B. F. Skinner*, Arlington House, 1974). I believe Professor Eysenck's discussion of my work could seriously mislead readers, so I ask you to let me clarify some of my anti-behaviouristic points.

In my book I argue that contrary to Skinner's *claims*, Skinnerian behaviourism is not primarily a theory derived from a scientific study of human affairs. I argue, with the use of many lengthy direct quotes and elaborate analyses, that Skinner assumes without any argument a basic ontology (a doctrine as to what is the basic kind of stuff of the universe). This ontology locates for Skinner the limits of the domain of reality open to scientific study. It also indicates, by implication, the methodology of any *bona fide* science. Thus, since the ontology is one of material processes (events, matter-in-motion), and since overt movements of the human body or behaviour of the human organism is all that is open to a science based on such an ontology, Skinner advocates behaviourism

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both as to *what* psychology must study and *how* it must conduct its studies.

Now I argue that such a defence of behaviourism is not scientific but philosophical since it is premised not on psychological facts, as Eysenck claims, but on philosophical theory.

Eysenck protests against my conclusion that Skinner is a reductive (not "vulgar" as Eysenck reports) materialist, that Skinner "is not identifying his 'radical behaviourism' with vulgar materialism (as Machan supposes)." But whether Skinner so *identifies his position* with the materialism I tag on him is irrelevant. He would very likely deny that he is in any simple metaphysical camp. The question then is *whether my argument succeeds* in putting him in the reductive materialist category.

Eysenck claims that "Skinner is talking about methodology. His concern is with the philosophy of science, not with epistemology and other ancient doctrines and disputes which are of no concern to him." Contrary to Eysenck, there is plenty of epistemology in any philosophy of science. Moreover in several places (e.g., *Science and Human Behaviour*, the Evans interview *The Man and his Ideas*) Skinner advances epistemological theories. Skinner has also written extensively on operationalism, a doctrine about meaning, and many other topics directly relevant to the issues treated within epistemology.

Of the several positions Skinner and Eysenck claim do not belong within behaviourist theory I maintain only one (not 5) as indeed part of the behaviourist's viewpoint, namely that behaviourism "has no place for intention and purpose." Any reasonably extensive reading of Skinner should acquaint one with this fact.

In the Margin:

AT A RECENT *diplomatic cultural function I found the place-card name next to me to be for a "Mrs Wagner." As it happened, the entire Wagner clan had been assembling in London for a first performance of one of the long-forgotten operas of Richard Wagner's son, Siegfried; and the lady in question might have been wife, or mother's daughter, or perhaps somebody else altogether. As it also happened, the new issue of* ENCOUNTER *had just appeared with that disagreeably cool and critical account of Winifred Wagner's current and quite unreconstructed attitudes towards the Bayreuth of the Third Reich where the* Führer *felt so much at home ("Winifred, Wahnfried, Wagner: a Silence is Broken in Bayreuth", December). In any case, whether there was a connection or no, the lady in question never turned up for dinner, and to make up for the empty place I surreptitiously removed the place card as a memento and a possible cultural clue.*

*I suspected, in my chagrin, that the Wagner family always cast themselves in roles with a heavy Teutonic seriousness; and once many years ago, on the lawn beyond the Franconian opera house which grandfather had built, I listened for hours to Wolfgang and Wieland telling me of their grandiose revolutionary plans. But Richard was, as founding fathers in their eccentricity often are, rather less single-minded and grimly purposeful. I have just been reminded of this in reading that curious letter he wrote in February 1880 to an American friend, his good old reliable Dresden dentist, who had returned to the United States.**

The letter contained (as one of Dr Jenkins' friends, a Boston musicologist, remarked at the time) "an extraordinary and almost insane proposal . . .", namely, Richard Wagner's firm suggestion to emigrate to the United States, to work there on his Parsifal, *and to go on with his career "in some state of the Union with a favourable climate"!*

THIS HAD BEEN *for a long time an odd transatlantic obsession of his (it had also gripped, in various ways, Chopin, Schubert, Mendelssohn, and others); and his persistently desperate finances only intensified his notions of a "permanent emigration." In 1854, writing to Liszt, he said: "I would even go to America to satisfy my future creditors. I would make that sacrifice for the sake of finishing my* Nibelungen." *And to his wife, Minna, he wrote (in 1859), "America, America, you must help! Money will do anything, you know!" For Philadelphia's great Revolutionary memorial occasion in 1876 he composed, for a handsome fee, the "American Centennial March", and added a little motto from Goethe (who had, after all, mused "*Amerika, du hast es besser! . . .*). By 1877 the fateful decision was almost taken—"to put my property in Bayreuth up for sale, to cross the sea with my whole family, and never again to return to Germany."*

As the ironies of transatlantic cultural history would have it, it took an American finally to dissuade him, to purge him of his "illusions", and (as Dr Jenkins writes in his "Reminiscences") "to make it plain that the place for his great triumph was in his

* Dr Newell Sill Jenkins had been the dentist of Cosima and the Wagner children, and sometimes did emergency work on the *Meister* in Bayreuth. Wagner once sent him the following verses to accompany a copy of some piano scores for *The Ring:*

I speak not of the tooth of time,
The tooth's own time is drawing nigh.
Is Jenkins then within this clime?
Time and its tooth I will defy.

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Intentions and purposes are, by Skinner's account, theoretically tied to the existence of inner agents, so they could not exist in any scientifically respectable fashion.

My own work cannot be chided, *pace* Eysenck, for extending into areas I am unqualified to treat. I make clear that I am not dealing with psychology but with philosophy and political theory. It is Skinner who advocates the reduction of all human attributes and actions to behaviours of the directly observable organism (and so denies the existence of what psychology is supposed to study, namely consciousness). Thus he advances moral and political theories under the rubric of behaviourism. Then to charge me with imperialism is unjust. Any reading of my book should clear up that impression from the first page on.

Finally, one problem with Skinner is that he has no respect for logic—he admits so much in one of his articles discussed in my book. He is inconsistent. He can be used to give support to many viewpoints. He usually speaks only of what "may" be the case. He is slippery. But by claiming to be scientific he has won the alliance of many people who, like myself, would welcome a scientific psychology. With the major alternatives to behaviourism it is no wonder that many people cling to Skinner. But, as my book indicates, there are better answers to the questions of psychology than what Skinner offers. And they are better because they, unlike much of Skinner's material, are not pseudo-science.

TIBOR R. MACHAN

State University College,
Fredonia, New York

Richard Wagner & a Million American Dollars

own country and among his own people." (Deutschland, du hast es besser. . . .)

The letter—which was recently reproduced in Die Welt, *Bonn (and there is a translation offered by Klaus Liepmann in an American musical magazine,* High Fidelity*)—is worth reprinting, not least for the shadows it throws over the simple clichés of musical ideologues and cultural nationalists who have plagued a century of Wagner studies.*

LIEBER, SEHR GEEHRTER HERR UND FREUND!

It seems to me as if, in my hopes regarding Germany and her future, my patience would very soon be exhausted and that I might then regret not having long ago confided the seeds of my artistic ideas to a more fruitful and promising soil.

I do not regard it as impossible that I decide to emigrate forever to America with my latest work and my entire family. For this, since I am no longer young, considerable advances from across the ocean would be necessary. An association would have to be formed that would offer me, upon condition of my permanent settlement there and as a onetime payment for all my exertions, a sum of one million dollars, of which half would be placed at my disposal upon taking up my residence in some state of the Union with a favourable climate, the other half being invested as capital in a government bank at 5%. Thus would America have bought me from Europe for all time. Furthermore, the association would have to furnish funds for the annual Festival performances, in which I should gradually bring all my works in model form upon the stage. These would begin immediately with the *first* performance of my most recent work, *Parsifal*, which up to that time I should allow to be given nowhere else. All results of future labours on my part, whether in directing of performances or as creative artist, would by reason of the sum made over to me, belong for all time and without further compensation to the American nation.

Now I remember that on your last visit here, in friendly enthusiasm, you offered to assist me in case I should ever wish to make a so-called artist's tour in America. You will therefore find it natural that I should turn to you and to no one else to explain my very much more far-reaching plan. A mere artist's tour, to make so-and-so much money by giving concerts and then return to Germany, would never be a thing for me. Only a permanent emigration could have any significance for me!

Kindly take a little counsel with yourself in regard to this matter and, if it impresses you favourably, give me your opinion!

Mit grösster Freundschaft
Ihr
hochachtungsvoll ergebener
February 8, 1880 RICHARD WAGNER
Naples, Villa Angri, Posilipo

But the fabled fortune and the last great journey across the sea were, as in O'Neill's Marco Millions, *ill-fated and not to be; the first performance of* Parsifal *was given in Bayreuth in July 1882, and some six months later Wagner died in Venice.*

THE WHOLE AFFAIR *is curious enough, but one melodramatic item makes it even curiouser. For the original text of the letter—which for subsequent generations of earnest Wagnerians might have amounted to little less than high cultural treason—mysteriously disappeared, evidently stolen from the files of Dr Jenkins' family. However, a reproduction of the original was later found in the one last remaining copy of the privately printed "Reminiscences" of the faithful Dresden dentist. As Professor Liepmann darkly asks,*

"Who had such an abiding interest in the Wagner-Jenkins letters that he got hold of them and made them disappear?"

The Gestapo? the F.B.I.? Smersh? It sounds more and more like a case for Chief-Inspector Bernard Levin.

M.J.L.

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Eldridge Cleaver: Views in Prison

A CRITICAL COMMENT in the *International Herald Tribune* (Paris) referred recently to ENCOUNTER's "italicised boxes" as a kind of editorial idiosyncracy in which some "latest nastiness" is exposed: Sartre, or the Black Panthers, or whatever. Yet we never wanted to be less than fair. So here are the latest views of the celebrated author of "Soul on Ice," the former spokesman of World Black Revolution, Eldridge Cleaver, as recently given from his California prison cell to Professor John Roche (who published the text in the "Boston Herald").

TWO ASPECTS *of the recent UN resolution labelling Zionism as racist both shocked and surprised me. Shocked because, of all the people in the world, the Jews have not only suffered particularly from racist persecution, they have done more than any other people in history to expose and condemn racism. Generations of Jewish social scientists and scholars have laboured long and hard in every field of knowledge, from anthropology to psychology, to lay bare and refute all claims of racial inferiority and superiority. To condemn the Jewish survival doctrine of Zionism as racism is a travesty upon the truth.*

Secondly, I am surprised that the Arabs would choose to establish a precedent condemning racism because it can so easily and righteously be turned against them. Having lived intimately for several years among the Arabs, I know them to be among the most racist people on earth. No one knows this better than black Africans living along the edges of the Sahara.

Once while travelling through Bamoko, Mali, a cab driver flew into a rage when we asked him to take us to the Algerian embassy. When he learned that we actually lived in Algeria, he concluded that we were crazy.

"Man," he said irritatedly, "don't you know that the Arabs still have black slaves?"

He was right, although I didn't find out until later. Many Arab families, that can afford to, keep one or two black slaves to do their menial labour. Sometimes they own an entire family. I have seen such slaves with my own eyes. Once I pressed an Algerian official for an explanation of the status of these people, and he ended up describing a complicated form of indentured servitude. The conversation broke up when I told him that it was nothing but a hypocritical form of slavery.

I HAVE THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY *for the Palestinian people in their search for justice, but I see no net gain for freedom and human dignity in the world if power blocs, because of their ability to underwrite sagging economies for a season, are able to ram through the UN resolutions repugnant to human reason and historical fact.*

The combination of Communist dictatorships, theocratic Arab dictatorships, and economically dependent black African dictatorships are basically united in their opposition to the democratic forces inside their own borders. This gives them a lot in common and lots of room and motivation to wheel and deal among themselves. But it is not a combination deserving of respect by people from countries enjoying democratic liberties and traditions of freedom. It is a combination that must be struggled against.

BUT IT SEEMS TO ME *that the Western democracies, the United States above all, are so guilt-ridden because of their past history as colonizers that they now swallow, hook, line and sinker, every half-baked argument emanating from the wise men of the General Assembly.*

I believe that the time has come to re-examine the credentials of all the members of the General Assembly. Why should all these little so-called countries with minuscule populations have a vote equal in weight to that of the United States? When such votes are cast in the reckless manner of the anti-Zionist resolution, it is time to sit up and take notice.

The so-called hard line adopted at the UN by Ambassador Moynihan seems too soft to me, and the support which he is getting in certain political circles is softer still. But the stakes in the struggle in the international arena are high. The General Assembly is no longer filled with Mahatma Gandhis pleading the case of the downtrodden, colonized masses. It is now a forum for crude, hired killers like Idi Amin Dada, the hatchet man of Uganda.

But it is not enough to criticize the negative aspects of the UN in print and fiery speeches, and then lose the crucial votes when the chips are down. Concrete steps must be taken to render the UN structurally incapable of cynical manipulation by hypocritical power blocs that devour freedom in the name of a just cause and undermine democratic principles with a reckless distortion of the right to vote.

IT MAY SEEM PARADOXICAL that I write these words from a prison cell in California. I am certainly not a stranger to racism. I have personally experienced it in the ghettos and prison yards of America. But I have also personally shared the experience of thousands of men and women now languishing in the prisons of Communist and Third World countries. The cause of democracy and freedom can best be served when men and women speak out against the forces that seek to nullify them, even if this means speaking out from a prison cell.

Eldridge Cleaver

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Life & Letters Today

London

PIGGERY: A member of Parliament may be called a racialist but it is unparliamentary to call him a swine, according to a ruling by the speaker of the House of Commons. Speaker Selwyn Lloyd made the decision Friday after a debate in which a member was alleged to have described another as a "racialist swine."

Mr. Lloyd told members who normally address each other as "honourable friend" or "honourable gentleman," that "the word racialist is not in itself unparliamentary but to call another member a swine is unparliamentary."

Other banned words include guttersnipe, rat, blackguard, cheeky young pup, jackass, dog, and stool pigeon.

REUTERS

London

AMERENGLISH: *The British Broadcasting Corp. is saying a graceful "thank you" this weekend to the United States for the gift of its language to Britain. That may seem somewhat backward. Americans speak English, which naturally is a legacy from England.*

"But it is the Americans who keep the language going and growing." "We thought it was time, in this Bicentennial year, to say thanks for the linguistic debt we British owe to the United States."

"Without Americans we couldn't make it, or get by. We couldn't even keep a stiff upper lip—that's your expression too."

Some British words—like trendy and bonkers—are making the journey the other way. "But the general flow of words is from America to England."

Words like patio and cafeteria and tomato are traced to the Spanish influence on the Southwest; phrases like dead broke, gilt edged, to get even attributed to Mark Twain.

The Jewish and German immigrant communities in New York—now he tells us, ouch, so long, you never had it so good. The French legacy in Louisiana—depot, buccaneer. A ghost town on the frontier produced phrases like strike it rich, pan out, Johnny come lately and go the whole hog.

Many of the words cited are not precisely common currency in England. The British do not yet call cops "fuzz," and "junk" here is something you throw away, not buy from a pusher. But the English deal with hoodlums and racketeers, some well heeled, and know that a hatchet man can put you on the hot seat or take you for a ride—all words and phrases spread to these shores by U.S. gangster films.

Yet again and again they returned to loving consideration of words Americans invented—peanut, backlog, warpath, scalp, white-collar worker, ranch, stampede. . . .

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

Paris

IDEOLOGY'S END: Former Communist Pierre Daix, on the French Communist Party's decision to drop the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" from its statutes. "As far as I am concerned, the French Party is guilty of Right-wing Trotskyist petty bourgeois deviationism of an opportunist, social-Fascist character."

EVENING STANDARD

Nairobi

IMPERIAL TONGUE: *English today is the "imperialism of language" and is becoming a handicap to the growth of the ecumenical movement, Prof. Robert Brown, of Stanford University, California, told the World Council of Churches.*

"For the majority of you, it is a disadvantage that English is not your mother tongue. Even the three languages used by the World Council—English, French and German—represent a form of northern hemisphere imperialism, linguistically exploiting the Third World."

Dr. Brown switched to Spanish to give half of his address amid great applause from Latin-American delegates.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Edinburgh

ROCKY SCOTCH: Local government reorganisation has done little to clarify councillors' rhetorical declamations north of the Border, where discussions have customarily been full, frank and very meaningful, moments marked by points in time, and points taken full, ponderous cognizance of. Our man in Edinburgh has been keeping notes:

Plans were dropped because of a "curtailment" of circumstances". Edumacation, sincereously, and the admirality (the moral rights of sailors?) all cropped up in Lothian debates, and the councillor who arrived breathless for a meeting complained he had been "elongated by phone calls".

Long standing solutions ran beside integrated proposals and one member sent another hurtling for his dictionary by calling him a "Fascist galoot". A compliant councillor wished to do "whatever exactly we want to do" but thought that "muriels" on the walls would be too costly.

The chairman who announced "We are here to homologate the minutes" puzzled his colleagues and almost won a round of applause but paled against the angry representative who cried: "Wa ken wa the heid bummers is" ("We know who the chief officials are"). The same man whose concept of east European geography launched Jugoslovakia into the Communist block perhaps sensed a red plot. "Some serious allegations have been made" he howled "and I want to know who the alligators are."

THE TIMES

Perth

MONSTROUS ANAGRAM: *Before the latest scientific triumph is hailed as valid, [by Sir Peter Scott, the naturalist, et al.] your readers might like to know that the generic name ascribed to the Loch Ness Monster—Nessiteras Rhombopteryx—is an anagram of Monster Hoax by Sir Peter S. So much for science.*

THE TIMES

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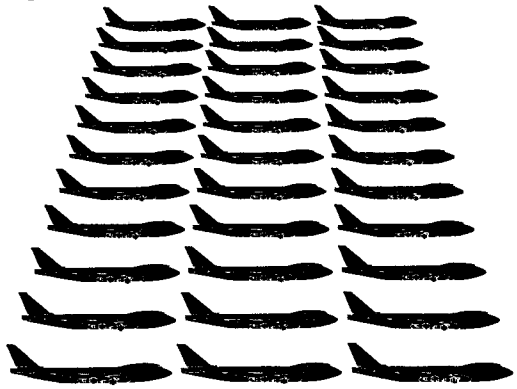
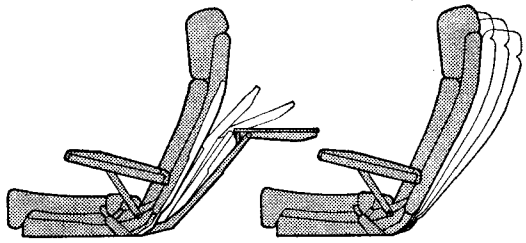
If you like 747s, you'll love Pan Am.



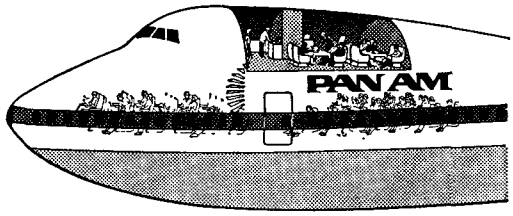
More 747s.

Pan Am has the world's largest fleet of 747s. The chances are, Pan Am will have a 747 flying where and when you want to go.



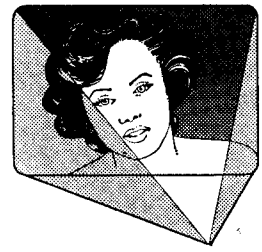
More comfort.

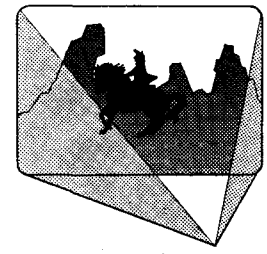
In Economy, Pan Am 747s have generously sized, reclining seats. There's room to work, room to relax. If you want a snooze, you'll find flying Pan Am is a dream.



First Class dining room.

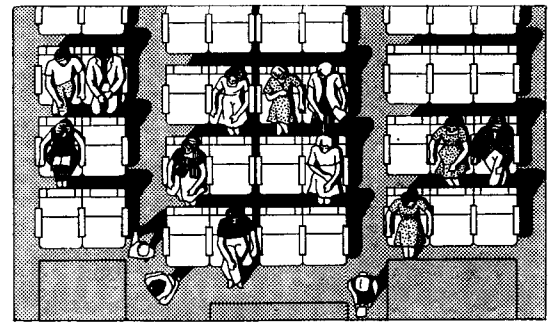
Only Pan Am's 747s have an upstairs dining room for First Class passengers. You can choose from a full menu—for instance, Roast Beef carved at your table, Sole Dugléré or Kebab d'Agneau—accompanied of course by a choice of fine wines. Like all the best restaurants, you have to book early. So ask your secretary to reserve your table when she books your ticket across the Atlantic.





Choice of entertainment.*

Not just one, but two of the latest films when you cross the Atlantic; take your pick. Or a choice of eight tracks of stereo music and entertainment.



More space.

On our 747s, there's room to move around. Plenty of headroom, and space for you to stretch your legs—while you're in your seat or walking about.

So next time you fly, take it easy. Travel in style on a Pan Am 747. And enjoy the comfort of Pan Am's World.

PAN AM

The world's most experienced airline.

* Regulations require a nominal charge for entertainment.

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